

**Citizenship and Diaspora Engagement:  
The Case of the Philippines**

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## **Abstract**

Current studies on international migration often focus on transnational processes and networks conducted across borders. While states increasingly engage with their overseas populations, their strategies are becoming ever more creative. As such, we see the development of state diaspora strategies emerging that aim to connect with diaspora to influence their economic, political, social and cultural activities. One particular state strategy that is receiving increasing attention is the strategy of extending dual citizenship to overseas populations in order to create national solidarity and to promote investment and remittances back home. While the existing literature is comprehensive, there is a significant lack of research that aims to determine if these strategies have a real influence over diaspora activities and performance. As such, this thesis aims to determine whether dual citizenship facilitates home engagement. Using a transnational perspective, this research explores the relationship between citizenship, diaspora and transnational engagements within the context of Philippines by conducting semi-structured interviews to better understand how individuals perceive and engage in the policies that are targeted towards them.

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## List of Acronyms

BSP	Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Philippine Central Bank)
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas
CIC	Citizenship and Immigration Canada
FDM	Foreign Domestic Movement
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Office for Migration
LCP	Live-in Caregiver Programme
LINKAPIL	Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino (Link for Philippine Development Program)
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
ODA	Official Development Aid
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFWs	Overseas Foreign Workers
PR	Permanent Resident
RA	Republic Act
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

## Chapter One: Introduction

The migration-development nexus continues to receive significant attention, especially with the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Nowadays, most international organizations and national aid agencies frame international migrants as development actors, and given the decline in official development aid (ODA),<sup>1</sup> the financial contributions of diaspora are playing an increasing role in the economic development of a country and in local poverty alleviation (Rosengartner & Lonback, 2013). Although the migration-development nexus has gone from examining remittances and return migration in the 1960s to focusing on underdevelopment and migrations and dependency in the 1970s, we see today a greater emphasis on migration and co-development, which celebrates circulation and focuses on a transnational approach (Faist, 2009, 38). This approach “recognizes the emergence of a new transnational agent in development discourse, known as ‘migrants’, ‘diaspora’, or ‘transnational communities’” (Ibid). Although these non-state actors are not new in the international arena, nowadays we see a difference in the speed, scope and scale of activities in which they engage with their home country. To this extent, their dual loyalties and extensive transnational ties means that “for better or worse, diaspora have emerged as one of the most important non-state actors in the international system” (Kapur, 2010, 38).

In turn, a growing number of emigrant countries are attempting to connect with their overseas populations. In doing so, migrant sending states seek new and creative

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<sup>1</sup> Most countries see a decline in net ODA received. See World Bank (2015) Net official development assistance and official aid received (current US\$).

ways to engage with their overseas populations for purposes of directing resources back to their home countries—often referred to as “diaspora strategies” (Kalm, 2013) or “diaspora options” (Pellerin & Mullings, 2012).

With the changing forms of cross-border mobility, membership and citizenship, Yossi Shain (2007, 129) believes that because of their location, diaspora activities can influence their homeland and can expand the meaning of the term domestic politics to include people outside the state. Nevertheless, it is commonly argued that diaspora strategies are employed as a means of extracting resources for economic gain, creating domestic and international political legitimacy, and utilizing those abroad as a cultural-linguistic resource by (re)defining the boundaries of national identity (Waterbury, 2009, 2). According to political anthropologist Aihwa Ong, this attempt to capture capital from expatriates is what she calls a “post-developmental state strategy” involving outsourcing aspects of national development to the private sector (Gamlen, 2006, 16). An extensive amount of literature has been produced on migration and development, and increasingly on diaspora strategies; however, Ricky and Ponte (2014, 16) suggest looking outside the usual scope of development confined by ODA to discover what practices are taking place, what they might mean, and how they might intersect with the practices we conventionally study as international development. Past research often views transnational political relationships as unidirectional, and as such, there is a gap between how groups mobilize themselves across borders and their connection around how homeland states seek to engage with their transnational populations (Brown, 2003, 80-81). Therefore, this research builds on the existing literature and studies the impacts of one of the methods in which states engage with their overseas populations—that of

amending their citizenship laws to incorporate their overseas communities into their citizenry. This particular state diaspora strategy argues that diaspora have a stronger (legal and perceived) connection to their homeland with additional responsibilities and duties as citizens.

The research challenge that presents itself is that there is insufficient information related to the connection between citizenship, diaspora and transnational activities. As discussed in *Citizenship and Those who Leave*, Green and Weil (2007, 2) identify the gap in the literature surrounding the politics of emigration and call for “multifaceted study of emigration, from the laws of governing departure and the formal ties that bind citizens.” Moreover, Bauböck (2009, 475) argues that political theory has largely focused on immigrants’ access to citizenship in countries of settlement and has had little to say about their relations to their countries of origin. Additionally, we must move “beyond theorizing how diasporic identities are constructed and consolidated and must ask how these diasporic identities are practiced, lived, and experienced (Braziel & Mannur, 2003, 9)—in other words study transnationalism from below, and the strategies that may facilitate participation in both countries of origin and the countries where they live” (IOM, 2010, 2).

Building on other studies, which explore power within nation-states this research is also interested in exploring how various actors carry such power and agency across national borders. Given that “migration is not an independent variable explaining change, but rather endogenous, it becomes important to recognize the reciprocal relationship between migration and broader development and engagement processes instead of the one-way-impact of migration on development” (De Haas, 2008, 43). Recognizing that

diaspora inherently have agency, states attempt to connect with them by providing dual citizenship, which may result in greater channels and opportunities to engage with their home country while living abroad. To this extent, this research is interested in studying what Saskia Sassen (1996) calls the “frontier zone” or rather where the local and global overlap and interact.

Furthermore, whereas most of the current discussions focus on the trend of diaspora and development policies, few studies actually evaluate the impact of such policies to understand how they may influence diaspora engagement. Given that diaspora strategies are implemented from above, this research aims to discover how diaspora react to dual citizenship strategies in terms of their perceptions and level and diversity of transnational engagements. This is important to study since it is only when migrants engage in economic, social, and political activities with their home country that they are able to contribute to its development—which may or may not be a result of the specific diaspora strategies by the state. Overall, diaspora agency and activities must be studied in relation to the state’s top-down diaspora approach, such as allowing dual citizenship.

To avoid theoretical overgeneralizations, we must also analyze both macro- and micro-determinants, and develop an appropriate research strategy capable of capturing the complexity of transnational processes (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998, 24). For this reason, this thesis intends to capture the economic, social and political agency as it relates to the transnational engagements coming from “above,” but more importantly, focusing on how it is carried out from “below” and how dual citizenship may facilitate various diaspora activities across borders. This reciprocal relationship will be presented using a

transnational approach. Similarly, these activities will be analyzed in relation to the frequency and type of activity to distinguish variance among individuals.

The Philippines will be the focus throughout this research; this case study will help study the Filipino diaspora-development relationship by incorporating citizenship into the equation. The Philippines was chosen as a specific case study given the size of its overseas population, the range of activities conducted by the Philippine government to engage with its diaspora, and the changes to the country's citizenship laws in 2003. As such, the Philippines can be considered as a unique case.

Given that approximately 10 per cent of the Philippine population lives abroad, it is no surprise that the government actively attempts to engage with its diaspora. Specifically, compared to other less developed and middle-income countries, the Philippines appears to have more resources devoted to overseas citizen engagement, as seen with some of its particular diaspora development programs. Moreover in 2003, the Philippines passed the *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act*, “granting natural-born Filipinos who lost their Filipino citizenship through naturalization in a foreign country, the opportunity to retain or re-acquire their Filipino citizenship” (CFO, Dual Citizenship). In turn, attention will be placed on whether or not participants reacquired their Filipino citizenship, and whether their engagements back home changed because of such legislation.

Lastly, while significant research has been conducted using the case of India (Kapur, 2010; Naujoks, 2013), the Philippines, along with most Asian countries, cannot be generalized. Naujoks' findings related to citizenship, migration and development in India cannot be applied to other countries given the numerous differences (including

gender, religion, profession etc.) in their diaspora populations and state policies. In particular, when comparing the Indian diaspora to the Filipino diaspora, there is a higher proportion of women who emigrate from the Philippines, and “Filipino migrants are [often] well-educated and highly-skilled professionals, and as such, they have the potential to contribute to the Philippines in a variety of important ways” (Garchitorea, 2007, 5). Consequently, India and the Philippines display several differences that may change the conclusions presented by Naujoks.

### **Research Question**

In light of the existing citizenship trends and re-emerging interest in diaspora, I use the case of the Philippines to examine whether or not dual citizenship facilitates diaspora engagement, and ultimately whether it encourages diaspora to contribute to the development of their country of origin. In order to study the connection between citizenship and transnational engagements, I aim to explore the perceptions of dual citizenship among overseas Filipinos in Canada; the various factors that diaspora consider when deciding to retain, reacquire or drop their Filipino citizenship status; awareness around diaspora strategies; the factors considered when engaging back home; how diaspora view themselves in relation to the country’s development; and whether or not their activities have changed since the *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act of 2003*. In examining these questions I aim to highlight individual views towards dual citizenship to assist in bridging the gap between diaspora transnational activities and the state strategy of dual citizenship, which aims to facilitate such activities. Moreover, this research evaluates dual citizenship as a state diaspora strategy that aims to promote

transnational engagements by analysing the particular types of activities and frequency of such activities among those with different citizenship statuses.

As it will become evident through the next chapter, I anticipate individuals who have dual citizenship will have a stronger connection with their home country, and as such feel obligated to participate in transnational activities. Furthermore, I believe that because of the Philippines' effort to connect with their overseas populations, individuals will have positive perceptions towards retaining or reacquiring their Filipino citizenship, and therefore participants will have a greater sense of connection to their home country once they (re)acquire Filipino citizenship, both real and perceived. Moreover, while I think those with dual citizenship will engage more often and in more ways with their home country, I also think that other connections facilitate engagement back home. Therefore, this research attempts to explore other connections that may influence an individual to engage in transnational activities.

### **Outline of Thesis**

This thesis is divided into four main chapters. In Chapter Two, I present the existing literature related to diaspora and citizenship. This review provides a range of interdisciplinary knowledge surrounding past and current studies conducted by academic scholars, national governments, and international organizations. It also highlights the increasing trend of allowing dual citizenship as a state diaspora strategy. Based on the existing gaps in the literature, I then present a transnational framework in Chapter Three, which will be applied throughout the discussion in order to study diaspora engagements in relation to state policies. The thesis then proceeds to Chapter Four, which describes the

history of emigration in the Philippines, the evolution of out migration in the country, and the changes to the country's citizenship law, which now allows dual citizenship.

Ultimately, this chapter highlights the relationship between the Philippines and its overseas populations. The empirical evidence provided in Chapter Five comes from 12 semi-structured interviews. The transnational framework is then discussed in relation to the interviews to provide a comprehensive discussion around the frequency and diversity of diaspora engagement and to highlight the perspective from the bottom-up. The final remarks are then presented in Chapter Six.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter is divided into two parts and presents the existing literature regarding the relationship between diaspora, development, citizenship and transnational engagements. Part I of this chapter defines diaspora and explains how diaspora challenge transitional views of state territory and power. After framing diaspora in the international arena, Part II discusses state interests in engaging with their overseas populations, specifically by allowing dual citizenship. From the perspective of the state, the latter section describes the connection between citizenship and transnational activities. Broadly speaking, the literature review suggests that states allow dual citizenship to connect migrants legally to their home country which allows for greater opportunities for migrants to participate more frequently, and in more diverse ways back home. However, in the following chapter I will discuss the limitations to this assumption and present a theoretical framework that will guide this thesis. My reflections from this discussion lead me to believe that while legal citizenship does connect an individual to their home country and open greater opportunities to engage, individuals have different perceptions of citizenship compared to states, and are not necessarily directly connected to their state through legal status, but rather through social ties which in turn facilitate transnational engagements.

## **Part I: Positioning Diaspora and the State**

### **Defining Diaspora**

Derived from the Greek term *diasperien*, from *dia-*, “across” and *-sperien*, “to sow or scatter seeds,” diaspora groups have been historically referred to as displaced communities of people, dislocated from their native homeland through the movement of migration, immigration, or exile (Braziel & Mannur, 2003, 1). More recently, Fiona Adamson and Madeleine Demetriou (2007, 492) view the concept of ‘diaspora’ as being “employed across a variety of disciplines in the social sciences as a means of studying the relationship between territorially defined forms of political organization and control, and the articulation and mobilization of political identifications.” As such, diaspora are commonly defined as migrants who maintain a strong attachment to their homeland (Cohen, 1996)—often existing as a social collectivity that spans across state borders (Adamson & Demetriou, 2007, 497). Additionally, Robin Cohen (1996, 515) identifies common features of diaspora, including: a collective memory and myth about the homeland, including its location, history and achievements; a sense of empathy and solidarity with co-ethnic members in other countries of settlement; an idealization of the putative ancestral home and a collective commitment to its maintenance, restoration, safety and prosperity even to its creation; the development of a return movement; a strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time and based on a sense of distinctiveness; and a common history and the belief in a common fate. Regardless of the often-cited common features of diaspora, we must keep in mind that diaspora are not homogeneous actors, and as Elena Barabantseva and Claire Sutherland (2011, 3) state: not all migrants belong to a diaspora since not all migrants identify and engage with their

country of origin. Therefore, rather than thinking of them as a bounded entity, Roger Brubaker (2005, 12) suggests that we think of diaspora as an idiom, a stance, and a claim, and that we should think of them in the first instance as a category of practice, and only then ask whether, and how, diaspora can fruitfully be used as a category of analysis. To this extent, this research employs the term diaspora generally to highlight an individual's connection to their homeland, while recognizing the variance among such individuals.

### **Diaspora and the State**

It is clear from existing diaspora studies that diaspora often experience double (and sometimes plural) identifications given that they live in one country and maintain a connection with another, leading to hybrid forms of identity (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, 5). Arjun Appadurai (1991, 48-9) explains that as groups migrate, regroup in new locations, reconstruct their histories, and reconfigure their ethnic projects, the ethno in ethnography takes on a slippery, non-localized quality [...] loosening the hold between people and territories and can fundamentally alter the basis of culture reproduction. This duality or plurality means that diaspora “enjoy a privileged status of exerting influence as an interest group in both the homeland and the hostland” (Shain, 2007, 139).

Given the unique position of diaspora, it comes as no surprise that they offer countless dislocated sites of contention to the hegemonic, homogenizing forces of globalization, and force us to rethink the boundaries between nation and nationalism, while refiguring the relations of citizens and nation states (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, 7). Specifically, “whereas nation-states consist largely of territorialized institutional structures, diaspora consist of deterritorialized organizational structures and transnational

networks of relationships” (Adamson & Demetriou, 2007, 497). Robin Cohen builds on Stuart Hall’s thoughts on cultural production and consumption and Benedict Anderson’s “imagined communities” and states that “transnational bonds no longer have to be cemented by migration or by exclusion from territorial claims. To a certain extent in the age of cyberspace, diaspora can be held together or recreated through cultural artifacts and through a shared imagination” (Cohen, 2006, 516). Given the dislocated position of diaspora, migration studies have shifted to focus on such transnational ties and activities. Garrett Wallace Brown (2013, 8) argues that this shift allows us to analyze the lived and fluid experiences of individuals who act in ways that challenge our previous understanding of geographic space and social identity. Despite recognizing the ways in which diaspora challenge state power and territory, this thesis examines how diaspora and state activities are connected through citizenship status. Therefore, I do not intend to fully discard the state-centered paradigm, but rather expand the arena to incorporate transnational actors.

## **Part II: Transnational Connections**

Members of diaspora may be interested in engaging with their home country while living outside of state territory for many reasons depending on whether they have family remaining in that particular country, if they desire to move back to their home country at a later date, and/or feel like they (or someone they know) maybe be affected by that state’s domestic/foreign policy. Similarly, diaspora can engage with their home country through a number of different channels. The following section will go into more detail on the particular types of activities this study will consider when examining the

engagements of overseas Filipinos, then move towards the discussion on state interests in their diaspora.

## **Types of Diaspora Engagements**

### *Economic Engagements*

Countless scholars examine the various aspects of migration and development, and stress that the economic impacts of diaspora on the country of origin is largely seen through their substantial financial contributions, specifically from remittances, or rather “private resources earned by migrants and sent predominantly to relatives for private consumption in their country of origin” (Merz et al., 2009). To this extent, “remittances are one of the most visible—and beneficial—aspects through which international migration is reshaping the countries of origin” (Kapur, 2005, 355).

Financial remittances have indeed become the most often-cited, tangible evidence for measuring the ties connecting migrants with their home countries (Guarnizo, 2003, 666). Similarly, as ODA continues to stagnate, or even diminish, more and more people view “remittances as a more effective instrument for income redistribution, poverty reduction and economic growth than large bureaucratic development programmes or development aid” (Kapur 2005). The extent to which remittances impacted home countries can be seen using the example of the 2007/08 economic crisis, where remittances softened the devastation for many countries, specifically in Asia. Additional research shows that “Philippine households with overseas migrants have done substantially better in the years since the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis than those that had no members abroad” (Kapur, 2005, 345). In particular, a study conducted by Adams

and Page noted that “on average, a 10 percent increase in the share of international remittances in a country’s GDP will lead to a 1.6 percent decline in the share of people living in poverty” (2003, 1). The long-term effects of remittances should not be underestimated. Although some critics argue that remittances cause dependency and conspicuous consumption, just like any other source of additional income, remittances can provide migrants, households and communities greater freedom to concentrate their activities and to allocate investments to those economic sectors and places that they perceive as most stable and profitable (De Hass, 2005, 7). As such, migrants and diaspora can act as bottom-up development tools by sending back money and other goods to alleviate more short term individual or group needs, which in turn can have an impact on the ability to focus on long-term planning. Nevertheless, we must bear in mind that while diaspora can be used as development tools, these transnational actors are not necessarily responsible for development, meaning that there are often other factors influencing their decisions in engaging back home.

Other diaspora activities in which governments have become particularly interested include direct investment in businesses, portfolio investment in emerging stock markets or government bonds, and development of global trade and business ties (Rannviég, 2009, v). Similarly, traveling back home, owning property in the home country, sending cargo boxes, and diaspora philanthropy can also have economic impacts on the home country. The latter example is most commonly understood as charitable giving from individuals who reside outside their homeland and who maintain a sense of identity with their home country, give to causes or organizations in that country, and for reasons of public benefit (Johnson, 2007, 5). In this case, philanthropic contributions are

often given to a collective group—sometimes religious, issue specific, or even through alumni groups. Guarnizo (2003, 669) recognizes that particular economic contributions may also have broader effects on both the social and political aspects of the home country, and that neither the everyday transnational practices, nor their consequences, are neatly compartmentalized. Furthermore, with the range of possible transnational economic activities available to migrants when abroad means that it is often the financial contributions of migrants that home states are interested in harnessing.

### *Social Engagements*

As with economic activities, social activities can also cross, transcend and sometimes transform borders and boundaries in many different ways (Levitt & Khagram, 2007, 1). To this extent, diaspora can also engage with their homeland through social remittances. Peggy Levitt (1998), one of the leading scholars behind social remittance literature, understands social remittances as the norms, practices, identities and social capital of migrants. Often facilitated through travel and various forms of communication, migrants send a host of skills, innovations and knowledge, including changes in tastes, perceptions and attitudes, which enhance diversity in society (Global Migration Group, 2010b, 3). Diaspora can also facilitate social remittances through online discussions, conferences, workshops, and other activities, which connect diaspora members in ways where they get to know one another, and transfer social remittances to their home countries. In turn, social remittances can improve socioeconomic outcomes in both the sending and receiving country largely through the flow of information. Levitt (2005, 2) expands on the notion of social remittances by explaining that there are at least three

types of social remittances – normative structures (ideas, values and beliefs), systems of practice (delegation of tasks and responsibility in the home, religious rituals and organizational practices), and social capital (status). Other authors build on Levitt’s work and highlight the role of foreign education, human capital and networks in transferring norms and ideas to diaspora homelands, and clarify that migrants can play an important role in social change by consciously or unconsciously breaking through traditional customs and taboos, and becoming more tolerant towards different religions, political views, and sexual orientations (Van Maerssen et al., 2008, 173; Pérez-Armendáriz & Crow, 2010, 139). While such an exchange of social remittances may seem insignificant, it is important to remember that culture “strongly influences how development goals are established, the policies put in place to achieve them, and how successfully they are achieved” (Levitt & Lamba-Nieves, 2011, 2). Arguably, other state policies and perceptions may also be formed by social remittances, such as those towards overseas citizenship, and therefore must be considered when discussing the connection between transnational engagement, citizenship, the state, and diaspora.

### *Political Engagements*

Finally, diaspora can participate in the politics of their home country while living abroad. Since the 1990s, there has been a “growing interest in how diaspora and transnational groups act as politically motivated agents to pursue international agendas in their countries of settlement, in their countries of origin, and/or within the international community” (Brown, 2003, 79). By maintaining a connection and by belonging to an imagined community, diaspora engage in “long-distance nationalism” (Anderson, 1991).

Specifically, Benedict Anderson (1991) states that diaspora engage with their home country without accountability since their participation occurs outside the traditional boundaries of the state. However, before such participation occurs particular state conditions are required to facilitate political participation for diaspora, including: the permeability of the homeland (state, government, and society); perception of the diaspora by the homeland (and vice versa); the balance of power between the two; and the cohesion of diaspora voices regarding homeland foreign policy (Shain, 2007, 130).

More importantly, Shain and Barth (2003, 456) add that diaspora are likely to engage with their home country if they view the homeland's foreign policy as having an impact on the interests of the people, the homeland's future, or if it affects the interests of a specific community. The decision to participate in home country politics is therefore highly dependent on personal factors as well as the national policies and conditions in the home country. This research aims to examine further how the state policy of allowing dual citizenship affects the activities, including political activities, of diaspora in their country of origin.

Ostergaard-Nielsen (2003, 762) critically examines transnational political engagements of migrants and refugees in local, national and global political processes, and illustrates various forms of direct cross-border participation in the politics of their country of origin such as voting, supporting political parties, participating in debates, as well as indirect participation via the political institutions of the host country (or international organizations). Other scholars examine how migrant political participation impacts the way democratic practices are institutionalized (Itzigsohn & Villacres, 2008, 664) and conclude that migrant political transnationalism has been a positive force for the

strengthening of the formal democratic rules of organizing political competition; however, the contribution of migrant transnational politics to the deepening of democracy towards more participative and deliberative forms is limited (Ibid, 2008, 644). In particular, Itzigsohn and Villacres distinguish between two forms of transnational political engagement: electoral participation, which involves the common activities of representative democratic politics including membership in political parties, monetary contributions to campaigns and participation in campaigns and rallies; and non-electoral political participation, including membership in home-town associations, sending money for projects in the home country and membership in charity organizations active in the home country (Ibid, 668). Within the literature it is often the transnational political engagement of voting that receives the most attention since it is arguably the most widely practiced by “citizens in a democratic political system, and determines which political factions legitimately set the political program” (Gonzalez-Acosta, 2009, 18). Arguably, voting is also used since it is often more visible and measurable. Nevertheless, transnational voting can take on various forms, including: (1) remote voting, which refers to any type of voting that occurs outside a regular polling station; (2) absentee voting, which occurs outside a domestic electoral district where the voter is registered, and can be cast inside or outside the country where the election is held; (3) extraterritorial or out-of-country voting, which is a type of absentee voting outside the territory of the country where the election is held; (4) expatriate voting for individuals who have a permanent residence abroad and no permanent residence in the country where the election is held; and (5) external voting where voting by citizens may be classified as external or internal according to the residence status of the person casting the vote, or the location where

voting takes place (Bauböck, 2007, 2398). Given the various ways in which diaspora can participate in the home countries political arena, and that the political aspects of citizenship may be the most evident reasons for (re)acquiring dual citizenship, it becomes critical to further explore individual participation.

While voting often requires a particular citizenship status to participate, there are additional activities that do not. Alarcón (2000) illustrates that diaspora are increasingly engaging with hometown associations, or organized groups of migrants from the same country and community located in the host country, which provide opportunities for their members to practice democratic skills such as electing leaders, collectively establishing bylaws, and planning and implementing charitable projects. Another form of transnational political engagement is diaspora activism. In this context, activism denotes political activities that are: (1) based on a conflict of interests and thus are of a contentious nature; (2) challenging or supporting certain power structures; (3) involving non-state actors; and (4) taking place (at least partly) outside formal political arenas (He, 2004, 4). For example, such activities may include protesting, lobbying governments and international organizations, and aiding transition and post-conflict reconstruction. In particular, one study by Pérez-Armendáriz and Crow (2010, 140) discovered that “about 5.6% of Mexicans with friends and family living in either the United States or Canada have protested,<sup>2</sup> whereas only 1.6% of those without friends or family outside Mexico report having done so. While this is not a direct link to diaspora home-engagement it nevertheless indicates the possible impact of migration on political participation.

Additionally, while most of the literature points to diaspora as being peace-makers,<sup>3</sup> we

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<sup>2</sup> Study held all other variables constant at their means.

<sup>3</sup> See Baser & Swain (2008).

must recognize that diaspora groups and individuals can equally lobby against their home country and promote radical groups in their country of origin—increasingly so with improved technology and ease of transferring money and goods. As such, this research evaluates participant activities in light of whether they have a positive or negative impact (real or perceived) on their country of origin, and whether such activities require a particular citizenship status to perform.

Now that we see the range of ways in which migrants can contribute and engage in their country of origin, we can better understand why it is that states often have a positive perspective towards their overseas populations. Additionally, because countries are looking to improve their economic, social and political wellbeing, states are “integrating a range of actors and institutions to implement sound long-term strategies” as a way to “focus on country-specific realities and critical issues in the field of social change within the current context of a globalized world” (Orozco, 2005, 326). As such, we see institutional responses to transnationalism that enable migrants to claim rights and membership in several polities (Bauböck, 2007, 2394).

### **State Diaspora Strategies**

While diaspora may engage with their country of origin in a range of different means, states may be interested in engaging with their overseas populations as a form of governmentality, “acting through the discursive and material knowledge production in the making of diaspora into development partners” (Pellerin & Mullings, 2012, 98). Specifically, state diaspora strategies are often designed to engage, enable, and empower

(IOM, 2010a) diaspora as a way to tap into their expertise, knowledge, and experience

(Vertovec, 2005, 8). With this perspective in mind,

we see that nationalism is very much alive as a political project not only of state formations but of transnational political diaspora and ethnic formations within existing states. Nationalism can also be seen in the current efforts by many nation-states that have experienced substantial out-migration in recent decades to go to great lengths to develop discourses and institutional mechanisms designed to actively promote the reincorporation of transnational migrants into their state centered projects—to ‘recapture,’ so to speak, migrant remittances, investments, and loyalties, as state agencies themselves transnationalize the meaning of nationhood. (Smith, 2003, 5)

This reminds us that homeland obligations can be constructed, and that diaspora members may be socialized “to assist the homeland, which can translate into a moral obligation to invest back (Nielsen and Riddle, 2007, 13), arguably by creating a sense of membership and national solidarity. Under these circumstances some governments no longer portray migrants as ‘traitors’ but rather as ‘national heroes’ (Faist, 2009, 53). In this sense, the government employs “programmes and techniques that encourage and harness active practices of self-management and identity construction, of personal ethics and collective allegiances (Kalm, 2013, 394). Indeed, "states deploy the language of nationalism precisely because migrants are outside state territorial borders but within the boundaries of the imagined nation" (Leblang, 2010, 12). As I will discuss in the next section, given the ongoing scholarship that suggests multiple memberships can enhance rather than compete with or contradict each other (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007), an increasing number of governments frame international migrants as development actors, and create conditions to facilitate development at home by bringing additional resources back into their country of origin.

As the migrant-development nexus continues to evolve, governments are increasingly looking beyond their territorial boundaries to draw those they deem co-nationals into a new sphere of influence (Barabantseva & Sutherland, 2011, 2). Some of the ways in which states implement diaspora strategies, include: (1) changing country of destination policies through diplomatic advocacy or treaty protections; (2) funding diaspora community organizations and the creation of educational, cultural, political and entrepreneurial institutions; (3) offering forms of political citizenship, such as voting rights, special forms of representation, dual citizenship or dual nationality; (4) offering full or limited forms of social citizenship through welfare state and labour market access and direct subsidies to diaspora members; and (5) extending the benefits of cultural and symbolic membership through rhetorical inclusion, ethnic identity cards and trans-border cultural exchange (Bauböck & Faist, 2010, 142). Regardless of the scope and scale of state diaspora strategies, it is promising to see governments reorient their policies from attempting to curtail migration to coping and working with it to seek benefits for all (Bhagwati, 2003). However, as these diaspora strategies are implemented, it will be necessary to understand the conditions that enable diaspora to contribute to their home-countries (IOM, 2010, 6).

### *Citizenship*

The most powerful and controversial of these state diaspora strategies is the expansion of legal citizenship through dual nationality legislation, which gives those living abroad preferential access to entry and the states' political community (Bauböck & Faist, 2010, 142; Waterbury, 2009, 3). Despite the strategic use of dual citizenship rights

being relatively new, more and more states are following this trend and recognizing transnational membership. This recognition can translate into absentee voting, tax incentives, and recognizing diaspora as contributing members of the national collective (Kalm, 2013, 379). From the perspective of the state, this change provides populations abroad with realistic incentives for maintaining loyalties that correspond to what those populations most likely seek from the country or origin, including some type of economic opportunity, symbolic and cultural membership, and protection and advocacy (Baubock & Faist, 2010, 143).

Before further explaining how states use citizenship as a tool to connect with their overseas populations, it is important to outline the varying definitions around citizenship within political theory. In particular, liberal theory sees citizenship as a set of rights and duties; republican theory stresses civic quality and the bond of community; radical theory links citizenship and direct democracy; and cosmopolitan theory views citizenship as a new global ethics that goes beyond nation-states (He, 2004, 79). For the sake of this research, citizenship is defined in terms of membership, rights, and participation (Marshall, 1964; Bauböck, 2009, 479). Here, membership can be understood as having a sense of belonging to a collective group. In terms of rights, Hannah Arendt defines citizenship as ‘the right to have rights’ (1967, 269), including civil, political and social rights. Lastly, participation with regard to citizenship relates to the political dimension relating to people’s responsibilities and duties vis-à-vis the state (Barabantseva & Sutherland, 2011, 5). These definitions, however, are largely from the perspective of the state, and we must recognize that citizenship may mean something different for individuals living abroad.

In recognizing migrants' connection to their homeland, the literature turns to external citizenship, which refers to the status, rights and duties of all those who are temporarily or permanently outside the territory of a polity that recognizes them as members (Bauböck, 2009, 478). Kim Barry (2006, 21) defines this connection as external citizenship, "which is meant to create a relationship of rights and obligations with emigrant non-residents in order to tie potentially reluctant or increasingly distant populations abroad to the state of origin, [...] and acts as 'a substitute for physical presence in the home state, and enables migrants' ability and even need to engage with it from afar.'" External citizenship can also have two dimensions: formal legal status and the lived experience of participation in national life (Ibid). These two dimensions signal to us that both legal and perceived forms of citizenship can connect an individual to their country of origin, and that citizenship can be issued from above and carried out from below.

Understanding membership through external citizenship suggests that states are more reluctant to recognize their overseas populations, develop diaspora strategies to address territorially absent citizens as members of the national collective, and extend the relationship of rights and duties across territorial borders (Kalm, 2013, 380). At the same time states are extending their sovereignty and redefining the boundaries of citizenship and membership to include targeted members of populations abroad through institutionalized packages of engagement policies (Bauböck & Faist, 2013, 141; Ong; 1999; Levitt, 2001, 204). As such, state diaspora strategies can be theorised as a particular 'technology of citizenship' through which individuals and diasporic groups are transformed into citizens (Kalm, 2013, 381). These innovative tools are "based on the

belief that common national identity can strengthen or underlie vital strategic alliances with corporate actors” (Ong, 1999, 21) which allow diaspora to connect and engage with other diaspora and those living in their home country, reinforces their sense of culture and belonging, and creates a form of transnational membership. This is taken a step further when states recognize their overseas populations through dual citizenship.

### *Extending Citizenship to Overseas Filipinos*

One particular case where we can see the state engaging with its overseas citizens is that of the Philippines with the extension of citizenship in 2003 through the *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act* (Republic Act (RA) 9225). This *Act* “grants natural-born Filipinos who lost their Filipino citizenship through naturalization in a foreign country, the opportunity to retain or re-acquire their Filipino citizenship” (CFO, 2014). This *Act* illustrates the shift in the country’s thinking and how the government perceives their diaspora. The Philippines, similar to many other countries in the past saw those naturalized citizens as traitors (Guarnizo, 1997, 309). Prior to the initial *Overseas Voting Act* (2003), Filipinos residing abroad had to present the country with an affidavit stating that they would return to live in the Philippines in the next three years. The Philippines also previously excluded dual citizens or those who have applied for naturalization abroad from voting (Interview, Philippines Embassy, Canada; Bauböck, 2007). Further, the Philippine Constitution states that “[d]ual allegiance of citizens is inimical to national interest and shall be dealt with by law”, nevertheless the country still allowed dual-citizenship in 2003 (Kalm, 2013, 385). In the same year, the Philippines also extended political rights to its overseas population by enacting the *Overseas Absentee Voting Act*

(RA 9189) granting the right to vote to eligible Filipino migrants—making the Philippines, among the origin countries in Asia to have gone the farthest in extending its political rights to its overseas populations through absentee voting and a dual citizenship law (Baggio et al., 2008, 172). Among the various civil and political rights gained under the Acts mentioned above, one can find (among others): the right to own land and property in the Philippines, to engage in business or commerce as a Filipinos, to travel bearing a Philippine passport, to vote in the Philippine elections, and to practice his/her profession in accordance with Philippine laws and regulations.

It appears that Philippine citizenship, which is extended abroad, constitutes a thick transnational membership<sup>4</sup> given that citizens are granted both cross-border political standing and equal political and civil rights (including migrant rights in host societies and/or in home societies) (Fox, 2005, 192). In turn, individuals who hold Filipino citizenship while living abroad may have increased avenues for participation back home, which explains one of the main reasons for the Philippines to amend its citizenship laws: for the economic benefits stemming from its diaspora. As in India, remittances were the major argument behind the change in citizenship legislation in the Philippines (Sejersen, 2008; Philippine Embassy of Canada, 2015). Moreover, from the states' point of view, these legislative changes aim to increase the bond with the Filipino diaspora all over the world, boost engagement with the development of the home country (Ibid, 116) and provide new opportunities for many overseas Filipinos to benefit from economic opportunities in the Philippines (Ibid).

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<sup>4</sup> Fox (2005) defines thick societal membership as full membership in a civic or political community that is rooted in more than one state, or in more than one nation within a state, usually based on shared cultures (nationality, ethnicity, religion and/or language).

*Evaluating Citizenship and Transnational Engagements*

In explaining the link between legal citizenship and homeland engagements, Alan Gamlen (2006, 10) states that this “upgraded membership status can flatter or appease expatriates, producing goodwill relationships that help to protect steady flows of remittances and investments.” Furthermore, the “psychological connection diaspora members have to their homelands makes them more likely to maintain ties and involvement in their home countries than immigrants who sever identification ties to their homelands” (Safran, 1991). Such a psychological connection is strengthened when migrants hold the citizenship of their home country—increasing migrant mobility and human agency by creating more opportunities and channels to participate in the country of origin. This process produces an interesting relationship between state and migrant. In particular, the “sending states are insuring their own survival by contributing to the constitution of new bifocal subjects with dual citizenships and multiple political identities, while simultaneously opening up interstitial social spaces which create multiple possibilities for novel forms of human agency. These spaces provide possibilities for resistance as well as accommodation to power from above” (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998, 9). It is argued here that networks and formal institutional practices can impact the way migrants assimilate into the residing country and engage with the home country. Specifically, “different cultural practices, such as the ability to invent kinship ties or membership in a clan or caste group, produces different patterns of transnational involvement” (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007, 144). Peggy Levitt (2003, 181) argues that less institutionalization may make it harder for migrants to participate in formal sending

country economics and politics, while on the other hand, more institutionalizations allows migrants more flexibility to combine transnational and assimilative strategies.

The arguments linking citizenship to increased engagement in countries of origin have been tested, although mostly in regard to the economic activities in which diaspora participate. The International Organization on Migration (IOM) asserts that several countries of origin grant dual or multiple citizenship in order to facilitate diaspora contributions, and, as a matter of fact, countries which allow for dual citizenship receive more remittances than those which do not (2013, 5). Further, Kim Barry examines the construction and use of external citizenship on country emigrants and argues that emigration states use external citizenship as a means of extracting resources, such as economic remittances and capital inflows, from emigrant citizens (2003, 34). Moreover, Christian Ebeke (2011, 12-13) conducted research on the links between dual citizenship and remittances, and his results indicate that countries that recognize dual citizenship receive on average more remittances than others. Ebeke argues that countries saw an increase of 43\$US in per capita in remittances a year, an additional 1.7% percentage point of GDP of remittances and around 90% more remittances than the countries which did not recognize the dual citizenship. The extension of political rights by the sending country helps maintain close connections and access a steady stream of international capital, capital that is available through their external populations through remittances and return migration (Leblang, 2010, 23). Additionally, Bauböck (2003, 709) argues that “remittances will cease to flow when an emigrant returns home permanently, or when he or she is completely integrated into the host country and its culture. It is therefore in the interest of the sending country if emigrants move back and forth or if they stay for good

but retain a strong ‘myth of return.’” It is further argued that remittances will cease to flow once migrants become fully integrated into the host country (Kalm, 2013, 383). Here, we can easily see how allowing dual citizenship can connect migrants to their country or origin and facilitate this myth of return. Furthermore, with an increased sense of belonging, migrants, particularly diaspora, will feel compelled to engage back home. Such connection integrates past and present citizens into a web of rights and obligations in the extended community defined with the home country as the center (Bhagwati, 2003), where holding more than one citizenship status can foster development through a dual culture, in particular with respect to language, which facilitates economic and social transfers (OECD, 2012, 10).

Additional studies have been conducted surrounding transnational engagements and the Philippines, with the majority of them focusing on remittances sent from Filipinos abroad. In particular, Bagasao (2005) studies Filipino migration and development, focusing on the economic advantages such as remittances, and the various government initiatives related to Filipino migration and country development, such as: allowing dual citizenship, the promotion of trade and investments, and advocating for partnerships between Filipino diaspora, local governments and development agencies. Other authors also write on the Philippines in the context of development (such as Howard, 2011 and Baggio et al., 2008), yet only illustrate the demographics of Filipino diaspora without engaging in a discussion about the relationship between holding Filipino citizenship and their contributions to their homeland while abroad. Further, while other cases, such as India, have been examined in the context of migration, citizenship and development, they largely focus on the diaspora membership policies at the state level,

and not at the individual level. As such, Naujoks recognizes the need to “sharpen our understanding of the concrete ways in which categories of diasporic identification and attachment prompt changes in the diasporic actors’ behaviour” (2013, 386).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter suggests that states are implementing diaspora strategies such as dual citizenship for the purpose of bringing economic resources into their country of origin. Specifically, existing research suggests a positive correlation, especially between remittances and dual citizenship (IOM, 2013, 5; Ebeke, 2011; Leblang, 2015). However, can these actions and state strategies actually be attributed to citizenship status, and although it is clear from the perspective of the state as to why they enable dual citizenship, how do overseas populations react to dual citizenship and what facilitates their transnational engagements? In the next chapter, I will build on the literature review, highlight some of the limitations, and present a theoretical framework to guide this thesis by studying this relationship from the bottom-up perspective of Filipino diaspora living in Canada.

### **Chapter Three: Developing a Transnational Framework**

The main observation stemming from the literature review is that the majority of the research comes from the perspective of the state. In contrast, there is a significant lack of research being conducted from the perspective of the migrants themselves. As mentioned, it is clear from the current discussions that states use legal connections as an attempt to facilitate transnational activities; however, external citizenship can also translate into other non-legal connections to the state which may also facilitate transnational engagements.

In particular, traditional notions of citizenship are often confined to the territorial boundaries of the state, and as such, diaspora challenge this definition because they do not fit in the traditional equation of membership, identity and territory given their overlapping membership and that their transnational activities across “territorially separated and independent polities” (Bauböck, 2003, 700). Furthermore, we must keep in mind that diaspora are distinctly characterized as having a connection to their home country, and it may not necessarily be through legal citizenship that they are connected, but rather through informal networks. To this end, the borders of the state do not always coincide with the borders of citizenship. Additionally, I share Mark Sidel (2007, 5) arguments that many states have overgeneralized or stereotyped their relations with their diaspora populations and that there is a need to better understand the nuanced role of the state and their transnational connections, specifically related to citizenship. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to expand on the literature provided in the previous chapter to constructing a transnational framework that can be employed to study

citizenship and diaspora engagement. This suggests that such engagements can happen despite absence of state relations. This section illustrates how transnationalism can be a useful tool in evaluating the role of citizenship given that it highlights the multiplicity of involvements that migrants sustain in both home and host societies (Basch et al., 1994). Based on this discussion it is likely that dual citizens do have greater agency and opportunities to engage back home, but it is also likely that there are other non-legal ties that help facilitate their transnational engagements. It is for this reason that this thesis aims to examine how legal citizenship translates into diaspora engagements, to understand transnational activities among migrants, and to bridge the gap between how these strategies are implemented from above, and carried out from below.

### **Constructing a Transnational Approach**

The goal of this section is to discuss the move towards transnationalism within migration studies, in order to lay the foundation for using transnationalism as a conceptual tool to evaluate citizenship and diaspora engagements back home.

Generally in the past transnationalism was often seen to be in opposition to assimilation (Lien, 2006, 57), whereas it is now more commonly being used to describe the multiple ties and interactions linking people and/or institutions across the borders of nation-states (Vertovec, 1999, 1). As one of the leading scholars on transnationalism Steven Vertovec states that the term “describes a condition in which, despite great distances and notwithstanding the presence of international borders (and all the laws, regulations and national narratives they represent), certain kinds of relationships have been globally intensified” (Ibid, 2009, 3). Indeed, “transnationalism is a combination of

civic-political memberships, economic involvements, social networks and cultural identities that link people and institutions in two or more nation states” (European Science Foundation, 2004, 7).

Transnationalism, however, does differ from diaspora studies. Specifically, we see that transnationalism offers a facet that helps us understand the types of activities in which diaspora can engage, whereas diaspora studies generally illustrate diasporic homeland connections (Bauböck & Faist 2010, 13). Furthermore, we tend to see diaspora perspectives concentrating on the communities living outside of a homeland (Ibid, 12), where transnationalism provides a robust concept for understanding local and global transformations (Anthias, 1998). Thomas Faist (2010), another leading transnational scholar, views diaspora approaches as focusing heavily on aspects of collective identity, whereas “transnational approaches take their cue from cross-border mobility, [focusing] on the changing forms of cross border mobility, membership and citizenship and the compatibility – or incompatibility – of migrant integration and cultural distinctions” (13 & 21). Similarly, Bauböck and Faist (2010, 13) define transnationalism as the changing forms of cross-border mobility, membership, and citizenship.

As such, we are seeing some of the dispersed diaspora of the old becoming today’s transnational communities, which are sustained by a range of modes of social organization, mobility and communication (Vertovec, 2009, 5). It must be recognized however, that not all migration flows result in transnational ties and practices. On the one hand, through social networks, migrant networks either do not deepen, grow more extensive, or become more institutionalized. On the other hand, other immigrant groups continue to evolve, either individually or in a group and share a sense of common

belonging to a homeland where they are not living (Ibid, 198 & 202). Similarly, membership in a transnational community is not defined by migration, but by a relationship with migrants (Levitt, 2001). In this case, “many shared transnational spaces do in fact create a sense of common identity and shared experience, but in contrast to traditional definitions of diaspora, transnational identities tend to be more dynamic and not always tightly connected to a shared homeland, ethnic identity, and/or other cultural signifiers” (Brown, 2013, 71). Further, whereas diaspora activities tend to have a multigenerational component regarding collective identity, transnational activities often refer to broader trans-border migration and the associated experiences of movement or networking (Vertovec, 1999; Kastoryano, 2000).

Notably, “the concept of transnationalism is central to contemporary migration studies because of the major paradigmatic and historiographical shift from structuralism towards an emphasis on individual agency” (European Science Foundation, 2004, 7). Rather than depicting actors as constrained by territorial boundaries, “a transnational lens opens up the possibility of conceptualizing the local or the micro in non-territorial terms [...] and pushes us to confront how taken for granted categories, such as citizenship and identity, change when they are constituted across space” (Levitt & Khagram, 2007, 4). Examining particular cases through a transnational lens then provides “a new analytic optic which makes visible the increasing intensity and scope of circular flows of persons, goods, information and symbols triggered by international labour migration” (Ibid, 13-14). As such, this thesis recognizes transnationalism as a “human phenomenon, both lived and experienced” (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, 8).

At the same time, transnationalism brings the state back into migration studies. Michael Howard (2011, 14) argues that “globalization emphasizes deterritorialization, whereas transnationalism is grounded in the existence of national groups and states.” Moreover, unlike the globalization discourse, which maintains a kind of zero-sum assumption where globalization and the nation-state are treated as mutually exclusive, transnationalism and the nation state are viewed as mutually constitutive social formations (Smith, 2003, 4). In other words, transnationalism deals with “processes by which immigrants build social fields that link together their country of origin and their country of settlement” (Glick Schiller et al., 1992, 1). Applying transnationalism to this research not only helps to explore the connection between states and their overseas populations, but also to understand how diaspora engagements work outside the realm of the state.

In turn, transnationalism is understood as a triangular social structure that incorporates non-state actors such as the country of origin, country of destination and the migrants themselves (Faist 2010; Gonzalez, 2013), and is employed as an approach to “de-emphasize the role of geography in the formation of identity and collectivity and to create new possibilities for membership across boundaries” (Appadurai 1996; Hannerz 1997 in Levitt, 2001, 202). This triad structure can be further seen when we describe transnational practices as the political, economic, so-cultural processes occurring beyond the borders of a particular state, including non-state actors that are influenced by the policies and institutional arrangements associated with such states (Schiller, 1999). Similarly, Rainer Bauböck (2003, 701) notes that the very term ‘transnational’ applies to human activities and social institutions that extend across national borders, therefore

referring to states as bounded political entities whose borders are crossed by flows of people, money or information and are spanned by social networks, organizations or fields.

In understanding the different actors involved, we can also see how transnational flows occur at different levels. In particular, Eduardo Guarnizo (1998, 200) classifies ‘transnationalism from above’ as global governance and economic activities, and ‘transnationalism from below’ as the everyday, grounded practices of individuals. Given that “migration today takes place in the context of heightened global economic interconnectedness” (Levitt, 2001, 203), we can see the different levels through the wide range of diverse activities coming from below and new forms of state engagements coming from above.

I argue that these diaspora and transnational approaches cannot be studied separately. Acknowledging their connections helps to overcome the emigrants-immigrants dualistic nature, by considering the impact of migration on both sides of the border (Levitt, 2001, 196). Therefore, there is a need to shift our analytical focus away from the place of origin and destination to the movements involved in the maintenance of cross-border ways of life (Levitt & Nyberg-Sorensen, 2004). Studying the relationship between transnationalism from above and below helps clarify several things, including “the ways in which individuals distribute their resources and loyalty between the sending and receiving country is, in part, determined by the kinds of institutional opportunities available to them” (Levitt, 2001, 198). Transnationalism also “attributes agency to individuals as bearers of rights and duties allocated to them by political institutions, and it takes into account individuals’ interests and identities in relation to the political

institutions that constrain or enable their actions” (Bauböck & Faist, 2010, 309). Overall, this relationship highlights the multiple ties and interactions that cross borders, uncovers the “intersection and collision of the many layers of relations, perspectives, and cosmologies” (Levitt & Khagram, 2007, 24), and challenges us to rethink categories such as identity and membership that are often taken for granted.

Consequently, the concept of transnationalism serves as the general framework for this project since it allows me to analyze the reciprocal transnational relationship between state diaspora strategies and citizenship laws that are developed in the home country, and implemented outwards towards overseas populations, which may influence diaspora activities in the countries of destination, and possibly impact the country of origin. Taking into account the differences highlighted above, this thesis moves beyond globalization and uses a diaspora lens to focus on the migrant’s connection to their homeland, however, favours a transnational lens to study the extensive and multiple transnational ties, cross-border activities, and broad experiences of migrants, and their relationship with the state. While this thesis recognizes the difference between transnationalism and diaspora perspectives, it argues that the two should not be studied separately. Specifically, since this thesis is concerned with the practices of individuals holding dual citizenship, transnationalism offers a lens to “capture migrants’ durable ties across countries, and more specifically, the everyday practices of migrant activities” (Bauböck & Faist, 2010, 12). Transnationalism literature seeks to incorporate issues raised by diaspora approaches (Ibid, 19), which largely focus on the commitment made by communities living outside of a homeland (Ibid, 12), while referring to the types of processes that transcend international borders (Ibid, 14). More importantly,

transnationalism allows us to view citizenship as a tool that “encompasses the social, economic, legal and organizational relations that simultaneously connect diaspora to their home countries” (Rodriguez, 2002, 343). Specifically, transnationalism is used to frame dual citizenship not only as individual and group agency, but also how state policies, such as allowing dual citizenship, which can provide opportunities for transnational practices (Ibid, 296).

### *Forms of Studying Transnationalism*

Critics of transnationalism argue that the term may be too broad, resulting in a lack of explanatory power (Levitt, 2001, 196), and “running the risk of becoming an empty conceptual vessel” (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998, 3-4). Hannerz (1996, 6) notes, “the term ‘transnational’ is in a way more humble, and often a more adequate label for phenomena which can be of quite variable scale and distribution, even when they do share the characteristic of not being contained within a state.” As such, there is a need to have conceptual categories to uncover and conceptualize such interactions and phenomena across time and space, given that several aspects of people’s lives cross borders.

As described above, and as seen in an increasing number of studies, “the development of migrant transnationalism as a theoretical tool has entailed considerable conceptual tuning concerning modes, levels and extents and impacts of transnationalism” (Vertovec, 2009, 18). Therefore, in studying the relationship between state policies of citizenship and migrant activities, this thesis uses Peggy Levitt and Sanjeev Khagram’s (2007, 3-4) discussion around theorizing transnationalism. Specifically, they categorize

five intellectual foundations of transnationalism, including empirical, methodological, theoretical, philosophical and public transnationalism. While this paper does not consider all foundations of transnationalism, it emphasizes empirical transnationalism to describe, classify and quantify transnational phenomena and dynamics, to reveal the processes and forms of transnational dynamics, and to identify and explain similarities, differences, linkages and interactions among different transnational phenomena. This transnational process is “understood to be derivative of or stand in contrast to bounded and bordered units, actors, structures and processes that are generally associated with the local, regional, global or the nation-state system” (Ibid, 9). Here I will use empirical transnationalism to study the process being employed from the top-down, but also to look at these strategies from the perspective of the migrants themselves to evaluate the possible connections.

Levitt and Khagram (2007, 21-23) also describe various transnational inquiries that are common among transnational studies, including inquiries that (1) analyze a particular type of transnational form or process across space; (2) examine a particular type of transnational form or process across time; (3) investigate different kinds of transnational activities; (4) compares and contrasts transnational phenomena and dynamics with those that are ostensibly tightly bounded and bordered; and (5) examine transnational phenomena and dynamics that allegedly compete with or supplant local, national, state, and global entities, with those that complement, interact with or transform them. Of these five common types of transnational studies, this thesis falls under the third form of transnational research, which studies the different kinds of transnational activities. Here, studying transnationalism means examining the various political,

economic and social relations diaspora engage in across national borders—  
simultaneously connecting them to their home country, specifically under what  
conditions do transnational actors alter their activities and how states invoke national  
solidarity and extend citizenship across state borders to encourage emigrant remittances  
and investment, political participation and various social transfers, given that states  
cannot directly coerce the participation of citizens outside the state’s territory (Glick  
Schiller, 2005).

Legal citizenship exerts an influence on diaspora engagement; however, I argue  
that the level of engagement is determined by how individuals perceive their external  
citizenship. As a result, I suggest framing this thesis in empirical transnationalism  
whereby I study the types of activities conducted from the top-down in terms of  
innovative diaspora strategies and government and multinational activities, and from the  
bottom-up in terms of non-state actor participation in transnational communities and  
activities in their everyday activities (Portes, 2003, 875). Before continuing, however,  
using a descriptive perspective requires the ability to classify and quantify what it is we  
are studying, in this case transnational engagements among migrants.

### *Classifying Transnational Engagements*

Studying transnationalism from below means examining the various political,  
economic and social relations diaspora engage in across national borders—  
simultaneously connecting them to their home country. Such engagements “can only be  
achieved through *doing* or, more broadly, through *performance*” (Levitt & Schiller,  
2004). Elaborating on diaspora performance, Levitt and Schiller (2004, 1010)

differentiate between *forms of being* as the actual social relations and practices that individuals engage in rather than to the identities associated with their actions, and in contrast, *ways of belonging* as practices that signal or enact an identity which demonstrates a conscious connection to a particular group. These “actions are not symbolic but concrete; visible actions that mark belonging and combine action and an awareness of the kind of identity that action signifies” (Ibid). Here, we must bear in mind that “transnational practices do not take place in an imaginary ‘third space’ abstractly located in between national territories and migrants should not be represented as the image of transnational migrants as deterritorialized, free-floating people” (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998, 11). In turn, if this thesis wishes to study transnational engagements among migrants in relation to citizenship status, we must recognize that individuals are very much connected to multiple locations and engaged in a variety of cross-border activities and practices. Using the various activities among transnational migrants will therefore help us to understand the possible links between citizenship status and home engagement.

Combining and building off the work of Guarnizo (1997 & 2000), Itzigsohn et al. (1999), Portes (2003), and Levitt (2001), I present a grid (Figure 1) to evaluate transnationalism from the perspective of the migrants in regard to the frequency and diversity of their activities. Given that I anticipate those who hold dual citizenship have greater opportunities to participate back home, studying the frequency and diversity of such activities will help quantify their engagements. Figure 1 presents an analytical grid to highlight frequency of transnationalism as either regular or irregular engagements, as well as the diversity of engagement, categorized as comprehensive and selective.

Defining the frequency of transnational activities enables us to better understand the variations within the cross border everyday practices of diaspora, and narrow our scope to shed light on the particular reasons for engaging in such activities. Defining these categories provides “two poles of a continuum defined by the degree of institutionalization, degree of movement within the transnational field, [and] the degree of involvement in transnational activities” (Smith & Guarnizo, 1998, 25). In other words, by studying the level of engagement, we move away from the two-dimensional perspective and are able to analyse how transnational activities vary among individuals. Such an examination may help us determine if those individuals with dual citizenship have a deeper level of engagement compared to those with only one citizenship status and whether dual citizenship leads to greater transnationalism.

**Figure 1:** Diaspora-Engagement Grid<sup>5</sup>

<b>Frequency/ Diversity</b>	<b>Comprehensive</b>	<b>Selective</b>
<b>Regular</b>	Predictable, patterned and habitual activities, ranging in various political, social and economic domains.	Predictable, patterned and habitual activities, ranging in only one of the listed domains.
<b>Irregular</b>	Occasional and irregular activities in a various political, social and economic domains.	Occasional and irregular activities in only one of the listed domains.

<sup>5</sup> The grid presented is not intended to be applied to individuals who stay behind, rather it can only be applied to individuals who live overseas and engage back home in their country of origin. It is important to note that movement is not necessarily a prerequisite for engaging in transnational practices (Levitt, 2001, 198-9).

*Frequency*

Pulling from a range of authors, this thesis understands regular transnational engagements as those activities that (a) form an integral part of the individual's habitual life; (b) are undertaken on a consistent basis; and (c) are patterned and, therefore, somewhat predictable (Guarnizo 1997, 2000). Similarly, other authors also refer to predictable transnational practices as narrow or core transnational practices, meaning that such economic, political social or cultural activities that are highly institutionalized, constant personal involvement, and involve regular travel (Itzigsohn et al., 1999, 323). Nevertheless, regular transnational practices do not necessarily imply greater institutionalization given that individuals carry out transnational practices in formal and informal settings (Levitt, 2003, 180). More importantly, once these activities become regular and “a scripted, ritualized part of daily organizational life, they enable participation across borders” (Ibid, 181). Similarly, regular and frequent transnational practices “are shown to have lasting impacts on families, on gendered social structures, and—drawing on Pierre Bourdieu—on the habitus of persons by way of conditioning their dispositions, orientations and patterns of social action” (Vertovec, 2009, 25).

In contrast, we see irregular engagements that “include migrants who engage in occasional transnational practices, such as responses to political crises or natural disasters (Levitt, 2003, 180). Itzigsohn et al. (1999, 323) characterize irregular, or broad transnational practices as “a series of material and symbolic practices in which people engage that involve only sporadic physical movement between the two countries, a low level of institutionalization, or just occasional personal involvement, but nevertheless includes both countries as reference points.” Other authors call these irregular activities

“expanded” (Levitt, 2001), or “strict transnationalism” (Portes, 2003), which are not well institutionalized, involve only occasional participation, require only sporadic movement (Itzigsohn et al., 1999, 323), and are sometimes only triggered by political events in the country of origin (Lien, 2006, 58).

In understanding the frequency of migrants’ transnational activities, Yossi Shain and Aharon Barth (2003, 452) suggest that

core members are the organizing elites, intensively active in diasporic affairs and in a position to appeal for mobilization of the larger diaspora; passive members are likely to be available for mobilization when the active leadership calls upon them; and silent members are a larger pool of people who are generally uninvolved in diasporic affairs in the discursive and political life of its institutions, but who may mobilize in times of crisis.

As the literature review suggests, individuals with dual citizenship, or rather a legal connection to their home country, feel more obligated to engage back home for reasons related to obligation and sense of belonging. As mentioned above, countries that allow dual citizenship saw an increase in remittances from individuals living abroad. Therefore, studying the frequency of engagements among individuals with various citizenship statuses will test this claim by determining whether an interview participant is a regular or irregular member of the diaspora when it relates to the frequency of home-engagements. From existing studies from the perspective of the state, it would be expected to see those with dual citizenship participating in more regular activities. Nevertheless, this research wishes to test this assumption from the perspective of the migrants, which in turn will help us to understand the factors at play when deciding to engage back home.

*Diversity*

The grid is also broken down to include a range from comprehensive to selective activities, where the former refers to an array of activities while the latter refers to a select range of activities usually around one aspect of a person's life. Whereas the terms regular and irregular refer to the frequency of participation, the terms comprehensive and selective allows us to understand the scope of such activities. In other words, the analytical grid presented above not only helps operationalize variations in the intensity and frequency of transnational practices but also confirms that cross-border engagements vary among other dimensions such as type and number of activities. This is important to examine given that citizenship is often portrayed as an instrument which opens new possibilities of engagement. Therefore it is important to clarify that even individuals engaged in regular transnational practices might confine their activities to one arena of social action, or that the "same person may engage in core transnational activities with respect to one sphere of social life and only [irregular] transnational activities with respect to another" (Levitt, 2001, 198).

We can also discuss the different levels at which the activities occur. Specifically, Johnathan Fox (2005) distinguishes between parallel and integrated transnational participation. In his analysis he observes parallel participation, which includes individuals who are active in more than one political community and who have multiple national identities. Their communities however, do not themselves come together, remaining separate from one another. Integrated transnational participation, involves multiple levels and arenas, such as the application of the concept of multi-level citizenship to describe membership in local, regional, national, and transnational polities (Fox, 2005, 188-189).

Within the scope of this thesis, I am particularly interested in integrated transnational participation that occurs on various levels and how membership impacts such engagement.

Regarding the range of possible activities, as it was presented in the literature review, states provide incentives to migrants living abroad, such as legal status, to encourage them to engage back home. In turn, these incentives come with additional opportunities for the migrants to engage back in the economic, political and social arena back home. From this perspective, it would be expected that those holding dual citizenship would be more involved in a range of activities in their home country given the increased opportunities. Again, this will be examined during the interviews to determine whether or not citizenship status plays a role in the range of activities, conducted by overseas Filipinos in Canada.

## **Conclusion**

Given what has been discussed, the diaspora-engagement grid assists in studying transnationalism from below, and how citizenship impacts the ways in which overseas Filipinos engage back home, by examining the frequency and range of activities among Filipinos living in Canada. Moreover, because the literature sometimes overlooks variations in scale, scope and the multi-directionality of flows and interactions (Levitt & Sanjeev, 2007, 4), this research is interested in studying and quantifying the different levels and scope of transnational participation among diaspora. In particular, while this thesis aims to determine if citizenship status, specifically dual status facilitates transnational engagement, a simple yes or no does not provide a sufficient answer given

that there are often other factors at play. Understanding the range of activities along with the frequency of engagements will allow us to narrow the scope and determine variance among overseas Filipinos with different citizenship statuses.

## **Chapter Four: History and Context of Overseas Filipinos**

In this chapter, the case study of Filipino diaspora in Canada will provide evidence on how citizenship may influence diaspora engagement and development. This chapter provides a history of the migration patterns of the Philippines, its emigration population, and changes to the country's legislation to allow dual citizenship. Providing an overview of the Philippines will provide context to Filipino diaspora and show how the country views its overseas populations. Given that a common critique of diaspora studies is that they are methodologically indistinct and ahistorical (Brazier & Mannur, 2003, 6), this thesis acknowledges the specific historical and cultural background of diaspora and their home-countries. It is important to keep in mind that diaspora are not homogenous groups and that the movement of such "populations have taken place at different historical periods and for different reasons, and different destinations provide different social conditions, opportunities and exclusions, and [such populations] may have also formed from collective representations of the group under local conditions" (Anthias, 1998, 565). Furthermore, this chapter will provide context to Filipino immigration in Canada and Filipino demographics in Canada, since the historical, economic, political and social structures of migrants shape in part their transnational activities and living.

### **Migrating from the Philippines**

Like most countries, the history of the Philippines is complex, and continues to evolve and expand. In particular, Gardiner (2008, 1269) describes that the Philippines

went through three distinct waves of out migration. Specifically, the first wave of out migration took place from 1900 to the early 1940s where the Filipino migrants filled a variety of jobs markets throughout the United States, within the agriculture, food processing and service sector. The second wave occurred after the Philippines gained independence in 1946 and continued into to the early 1970s, when a more class-diversified stream of Filipinos departed for the United States, including military personnel and their families, medical professionals and skilled technical workers (Ibid, 1270). A third wave of migration saw Filipinos become more visible in global labour markets. This period began in the mid-1970s with the devastating effects of increased prices of crude oil (Ibid, 1270) where President Marcos led the Labour Export Policy in 1974 aiming to send skilled manual labourers to Saudi Arabia and the neighboring oil-rich countries (Howard, 2011, 54). Further, the “political instability and economic stagnation in the Philippines in the final years of the Marcos dictatorship (which ended in 1986) and during the administration of Corazon Aquino (1986-92) caused increasing numbers of Filipinos to come to Canada in the mid-1980s and early 1990s” (Kelly, 2014, 10). At this time, the number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) continued to increase, and the government created additional agencies to promote labour migration and to regulate international recruiting processes. Today, Filipinos have secured a niche in nursing, seafaring, and domestic work, and the Philippines continues to send a vast number of people abroad, making the country one of the top ten emigration countries in the world (World Bank, 2011), with the largest Filipino population overseas residing in the United States and Saudi Arabia (CFO, 2013).

## **Filipino Demographics in Canada**

The case of the Philippines was largely selected for this research based on its growing population living abroad and its growing transnational presence. With an approximate population of 10.2 million living abroad,<sup>6</sup> Canada receives the fifth largest number of overseas Filipinos, behind the United States, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Malaysia (CFO, 2013). Moreover, with an approximate population of 721, 578 in Canada (CFO, 2013, Global Mapping of Overseas Filipinos), Filipinos make up the fourth largest visible minority group in Canada,<sup>7</sup> with approximately 294,000 reported Canadian citizens having been born in the Philippines.<sup>8</sup> In Canada, there is also a distinctive geography associated with Filipino arrivals (Kelly, 2014, 10), whereby it is a heavy urban population, with the majority of living in Toronto and Vancouver. Further, Tagalog, a language of the Philippines, is the most common language after English, French, and Chinese languages in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2013), as well as the most common reported language among permanent residents in 2013 (CIC, 2013, Facts and Figures).

Following the government of Canada's changes to its "immigration regulations in the late 1960s, immigration from the Philippines gradually increased from a few thousand individuals per year to almost 10,000 annually by 1974" (Kelly, 2014, 9). Another federal policy that increased the number of Filipino migrants to Canada was the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) program (1982-93), which brought women to work as

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<sup>6</sup> Based on the 2013 CFO Stock Estimate on Overseas Filipinos, there were a total of 10,238,614 overseas Filipinos (4,869,766 were permanent, 4,207,018 were temporary, and 1,161,830 were irregular). See: <http://cfo.gov.ph/images/stories/pdf/StockEstimate2013.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada (2014) states "Filipinos make up the fourth largest visible minority after South Asians, Chinese and Blacks."

<sup>8</sup> CIC. (2011). 2011 NHS: Data Tables.

domestic caregivers (Ibid). Later, in 1993, the FDM was replaced with the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), creating a significant new immigration channel, particularly from the Philippines (Gardiner, 2008, 1273). Many Filipinos also come to Canada through family reunification programs, and under temporary worker programs, in which fourteen percent of temporary workers in Canada are from the Philippines (Thomas, 2010), or under the skilled worker stream, whereby “middle-class Filipinos are deemed eligible to enter Canada because of their ranking under a points system which scores levels of education and employment experience, among other things” (Gardiner, 2008, 1280). Research suggests that Filipinos often have more years of education compared to other migrants coming from Asia, and are often more empowered given their human capital and access to social capital and vast networks (Baggio & Asis, 2008, 79-81).

From its onset to 2009, the LCP accounted for 26.3 percent of all immigrant arrivals from the Philippines into Canada, and by the late 2000s, the LCP was the single largest immigration program used by Filipino arrivals (Kelly, 2014, 10), of which 90% of caregivers in Canada are women. This point clearly highlights the gendered feature of Overseas Filipino Workers;<sup>9</sup> where on average 50-60 per cent of Filipino migrants are women (Martin & Midgley, 2004, 1552; Cortina, 2013, 290). The results from the LCP have been mixed, and it largely criticized for bringing poor economic outcomes for those entering through the program, long periods of family separation, and an association of Filipino identity with a certain type of work (Kelly, 2014, 10). Moreover, many Filipino nurses deliberately deskill themselves given the difficulty in finding work as nurses (Ibid, 1273; Kelly, 2014, 11; Pratt, 1999). We see further difficulties associated with the LCP

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<sup>9</sup> By examining migrant gender, we see how men and women are slotted in specific job categories and niches, such as migrant women from the Philippines in health care or household work and men in shipping and constructing (Faist, 2009, 54).

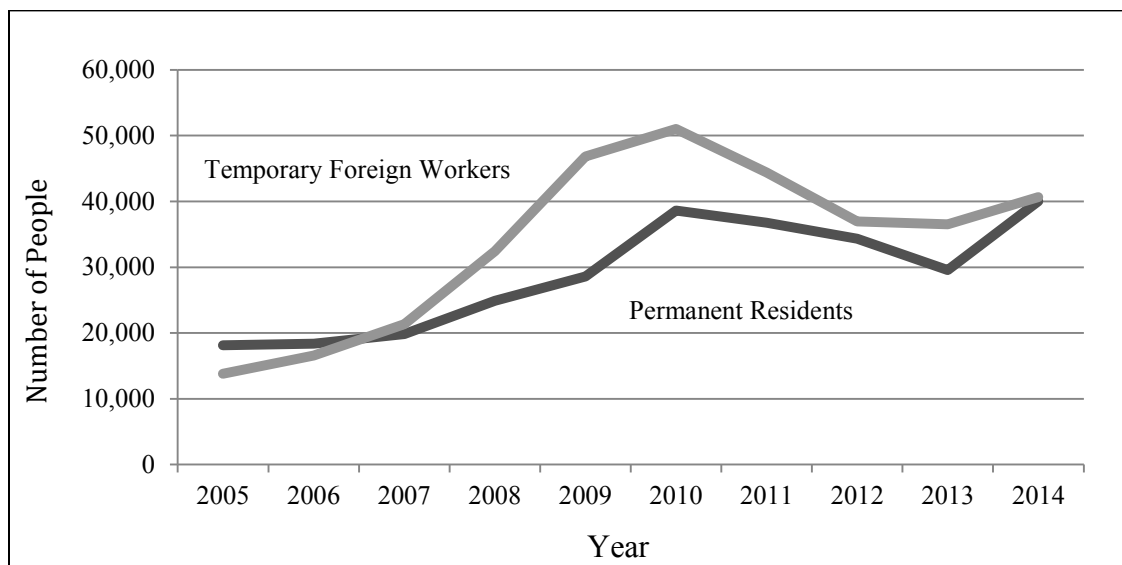
when we examine the number of live-in caregivers who transition to permanent resident status. In 2004, Canada saw 1,022 live-in-caregivers transitioning from temporary status to Permanent Resident (PR), to only 132 people in 2013, whereas other categories of temporary foreign workers continues to increase in transitions to PR from 2,938 in 2004 to 6,152 people in 2013 (CIC, 2013, Facts and Figures). In addition to the changes made to the LCP in 2014,<sup>10</sup> which make it more difficult to obtain PR status for live-in caregivers, another possible reason for the low transition rate might stem from the fact that it is often women who come to Canada through the LCP and leave their families behind, and may want to return to their country of origin following their two-year contract.

Overall, with the slow economic growth, high unemployment, and high population growth in the Philippines, some 1.3 million Filipino job seekers are added to the labor market each year (Baggio & Asis, 2008, 10), meaning that more and more people will likely seek opportunities abroad. This is made apparent when looking at Figure 2, which assumes that the number of permanent residents and temporary foreign workers entering Canada who hold Filipino citizenship will continue to increase in upcoming years.

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<sup>10</sup> In 2014 the LCP was amended to a two-stream system meaning that after the two-year restriction there is no guarantee of obtaining PR status. Rather, individuals must apply under two categories — those caring for children, and those caring for people with high medical needs.

**Figure 2:** Permanent Residents and Temporary Foreign Workers holding Philippine Citizenship in Canada



Source: CIC, 2013<sup>11</sup>

With approximately 10 per cent of its population living abroad (CFO, 2014), the Philippines significantly benefits from its diaspora. In 2014, overseas Filipinos contributed an estimated \$25 billion dollars in remittances—the third largest remittance receiving country, after India with \$70 billion, and China with \$60 billion (World Bank, 2014). Moreover, in 2010, of the total US\$17 billion remittances from overseas Filipinos, 10% (US\$ 1.7 billion) was sent from Canada (Embassy, 2015). More recently, personal remittances were estimated to be approximately US\$ 28 billion in 2014, equalling 10% of the Philippine GDP, (World Bank, 2015, Personal Remittances Received). Nevertheless, such estimated figures are difficult to assess given that most recorded remittances do not take into account the informal personal transfers, which have been estimated at approximately US\$ 7 billion (Howard, 2011, 55). Interestingly, in an interview conducted

<sup>11</sup> A challenge of this research was the lack of current statistics, particularly on the number of Filipino-Canadians. This is partially because the National Household Survey, conducted by Canada, was last conducted in 2011, and was not as extensive as the previous long-form census.

on January 23, 2015, a representative from the Embassy of the Philippines in Ottawa, Canada mentioned that the extent of remittances might not actually be as high as we think. In particular, the Embassy raised concerns that some remittances may be counted twice, and that there may be some overlap with remittances being sent from the United States. Regardless of the difficulty in quantifying remittances, the impact remains significant. This impact is seen when we compare the US\$ 25 billion dollars of personal remittances to the US\$ 190 million dollars of net ODA received by the Philippines in 2013. As such, these personal remittances (received through formal and informal channels), can contribute to the country's economic resilience during economic turmoil and natural disasters, as well as individual poverty alleviation.

### **Filipino Diaspora Strategies from the Perspective of the State**

Seeing that the Philippines greatly benefits from its diaspora, it comes as no surprise that the country has a long history of actively connecting and engaging with its overseas populations. However, there is little research conducted on this topic. In their article, *Moving Out, Back and Up: International Migration and Development Prospects in the Philippines* (2008), Fabio Baggio and Maruja M. B. Asis (2008, 100-1) provide a descriptive analysis of the history of overseas Filipinos and their engagement back home. They also recognize that there is a need for further research in order to evaluate the impact of the citizenship law on investments, including the transfer of economic and social remittances, as well as a further understanding of the factors that influence overseas Filipinos to exercise the right to vote, and the reasoning behind why overseas Filipinos reacquire (or do not) Filipino citizenship.

Struggling with balance of payment requirements and rising unemployment in 1974, President Marcos introduced Presidential Decree 442 which set out a policy of labor export creating state agencies charged with deploying Filipino workers overseas (Rodriguez, 2002, 346) through the labor Code of the Philippines (Rannvieg, 2009, 56). At that time, President Marcos also used the term *Balikbayan* (meaning home-comers in Tagalog) during a national speech where he encouraged overseas Filipinos to travel back to the Philippines by announcing new regulations to facilitate their return. Although, it is important to note that *Balikbayan* initially only addressed those who had given up their Filipino citizenship, in 1989 *Balikbayan* was extended to include both citizens and non-citizens who wished to return for a visit that could last up to a year (Basch et al, 1994). Later, the then President Aquino extended the *Balikbayan* regulations and stated her concern for the numerous silent “heroes and heroines of the Philippines” working overseas (Ibid, 3). Today, *Balikbayan* benefits are designed by the Philippine Department of Tourism to attract overseas Filipinos to return home by recognizing their contribution to the Philippine economy. Such *Balikbayan* perks include a one-year travel visa, and increased duty amounts and travel luggage when travelling back to the Philippines.

Another transnational activity common among overseas Filipinos, regardless of their citizenship status is that of sending a balikbayan box, which is translated to mean repatriate or return home box. Originally started in the 1980s in New York, the founder of Johnny Air Cargo started taking boxes back to the Philippines himself for nurses who wanted to send various goods and items to their family members back home (Basch et al, 1994, 268). Later, in 1989, “the balikbayan box business was already contributing 4.2 billion pesos (or US\$ 190 million) annually to the country’s economy and of that, 3.3

billion pesos went directly to Filipino families in the form of basic commodities, 155 million pesos went to the state in custom duties and taxes on boxes that were shipped, and the remainder went to the businesses involved in the shipments (Basch et al, 1994, 282). The income generated from the balikbayan box industry today could not be found, but we can assume that it is worth more than \$190 million today given that the number of overseas Filipinos continues to grow and with increased interconnectivity and globalization since the 1980/90s, overseas Filipinos are able to access such services more easily.

Today, the average 20x18x18 inch cardboard box is packed in large shipping containers and received by friends and family members in the Philippines approximately two to three months later. With no weight limit, people send anything from canned goods, other food items, used clothes, school supplies, and household items. These boxes are often seen as economic engagement, but also as having cultural underpinnings of sharing, “derived from the values of *bayanihan* (cooperative endeavor), *damayan* (mutual) and *pakikipagkapwa* (social)” (Baggio et al., 2008, 98; Asis, 2008). From what has been stated about the overall Balikbayan policies and boxes, it is clear that the state plays a role in constructing a social connection to the Philippines through various transnational practices.

There are several other ways in which the Philippine government acknowledges its diaspora by using symbols, language, and political rituals, to construct an ideology that envisions migrants as loyal citizens of their ancestral nation-state (Basch, 1994, 3). Specifically, the government considers overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) as *bagong bayani* (the “new heroes”) “in appreciation of the sacrifices they make to support their

families, and by extension, the nation's economy" (Baggio et al., 2008, 79). Rodriguez (2002, 347) argues that this "'new national heroism' unlike the notion of the *Balibayan* is a discourse that attempts to incorporate migrant laborers (as opposed to emigrants) as part of the nation." She adds that as new national heroes, "the state requires that migrants be a particular kind of citizen. This is made clear in a motto emblazoned on many public schools, stating, '*Taas-Noo, Kahit Kanino sa Buong Mundo Tayo ay Filipino*' ('Keep your head high in front of everyone in the whole world because we are Filipino')" (Rodriguez, 2002, 347). Similarly the phrase '*dahil saan ka man naroon, Filipino ka pa rin*' ('because wherever you are, you're always Filipino') is used to preserve Filipino identity, creating a sense of obligation to their home country.

The Philippine government also recognizes its diaspora through various national and international appreciation days, including June 7<sup>th</sup> as Migrant Workers Day (a government-designated event to commemorate the passage of the *Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act* of 1995), the first Sunday following Ash Wednesday as National Migrants Day (an initiative of the Catholic Church), the month of December as Overseas Filipinos Month (spearheaded by the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO)), and December 18<sup>th</sup> as International Migrants Day (an international initiative that started in the Philippines in 1997) (Baggio et al., 2008, 79; Kalm, 2013, 389).

Additionally, the Philippines presents special awards to honor outstanding and exemplary OFWs and family members left-behind (i.e Bagong Bayani Foundation Inc. Awards) and the Filipino president welcomes some returning migrants at Christmas in *Pamaskong Handog sa OFWs* (welcome home overseas foreign workers) ceremony (Cortina, 2013). Several tours are also organized by the Philippines including the *Lakbay-Aral Program*

which offers a two-week travel-study programme for young Filipinos who want to trace their roots (Kalm, 2013, 390), the *Balik Scientist Program* put on by the Philippine Department of Science and Technology, the winter and summer escapade put on by the Philippine Embassy in Canada, and various roadshows<sup>12</sup> put on by the Philippine embassies in the United States to promote investment, and social programs including education, housing, and Internet connectivity projects (Merz et al., 31).

Diaspora engagement is also illustrated within the country's economic and development policies. Mexico and the Philippines are often cited as extreme examples in which the government is attempting to attract economic and lobbying resources from their citizens abroad while making some effort to protect their human rights (Fitzgerald, 2006). This can be explicitly observed by the Philippine government, through the establishment of the Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO) in 1980. In particular, the CFO spearheads numerous Diaspora to Development (D2D)<sup>13</sup> programs, including: tourism initiatives, which support Balikbayan tourism by encouraging migrant investments in small tourism enterprises; diaspora philanthropy (such as *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino / Link for Philippine Development Program* or LINKAPIL) which focuses primarily on facilitating donations in cash or in kind for development projects; and diaspora investment where new financial instruments are developed and promoted for overseas Filipinos to invest in (CFO, D2D, 2015). In addition to its diaspora development programs, the Philippine government is very vocal and stresses migrant

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<sup>12</sup> The 2006 roadshow was called "*Bayan Ko, Bahay Ko*" ("my country, my home" in Tagalog) (Merz et al., 2007, 31).

<sup>13</sup> The CFO's Diaspora to Development (D2D) program provides frameworks and strategies for mobilizing the Philippine Diaspora for development in ten areas of action: (1) Business Advisory Circle; (2) Brain-Gain Program; (3) Diaspora Philanthropy; (4) Diaspora Investments; (5) Tech and Educational Exchange; (6) Tourism Initiatives; (7) Global Legal Assistance Program; (8) Medical Mission Coordination; (9) Arts and Culture Exchange; and (10) Return and Reintegration.

rights and protection while living abroad. Rannvieg (2009), is one of the many scholars who views this connection as a means of maintaining a strong flow of remittances (to relieve poverty and support the balance of payments), reducing unemployment, fulfilling a duty to protect its citizens, and deflecting the political criticism that flows from so many Filipinos having to seek work abroad in positions that leave them vulnerable to abuse. In particular, the Philippines was among one of the first countries in Asia to draft a law that aimed "to establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers, their families and overseas Filipinos in distress"<sup>14</sup> (Asis, 2006).

Following various concerns surrounding OFWs, President Ramos, passed the *Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act* (RA 9208) in 1995 (Ibid), which was later followed by the *Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act* of 2003 (RA 9208), the *Overseas Absentee Voting Act* of 2003 (RA 9189) and the *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act* of 2003 (RA 9225) which promoted the political rights of migrants (Baggio et al., 2008, 85) and was a step towards protecting worker's rights overseas, particularly for individuals holding Filipino citizenship.

Since the changes to Philippine overseas voting, the Commission on Overseas Filipinos (CFO) noted that the 2004 presidential elections saw a record-high 64 per cent overseas voter's turnout, with a 16 per cent turnout in the 2007 *Barangay* or Municipal elections, and then only a 26 per cent during the 2010 presidential elections (Overseas Voting Act 2013, 2015). In Canada, the number of people who participated in Philippine elections slightly increased from the 2010 to the 2013 election; however, the actual

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<sup>14</sup> Despite the various legislation aimed at protecting overseas Filipinos, a significant number of Filipino men and women who migrate abroad for work are still subjected to conditions of involuntary servitude, including in Canada (Baggio et al., 2008, 119).

percentage of voter turnout decreased in 2013 when examining the possible number of voters who registered (Figure 3). This could be attributed to the fact that the 2013 election was a midterm election, focusing more on the legislature, whereas the 2010 election was to elect the president. Baggio et al. (2008, 99), sees the low turnout of absentee voting caused by the fact that citizenship law has few takers thus far. Other factors could be the fact that there are inefficiencies in the voting system related to accessibility of embassies, lack of information and interest, and cost of traveling to register, and ballot envelopes not being received by voters due to wrong addresses. Nevertheless, the number of people who registered and voted in the election still increased in size, which could be because of the government's efforts to increase voter turnout, as well as the increasing number of overseas Filipinos who hold Filipino (or dual) citizenship.

**Table 1:** Overseas Voting April 10 to May 13, 2013 National and Local Elections Report on Voters Turnout (Canada)

Post	Number of people who actually voted		Number of registered voters		Percentage (%) of voter's turn-out	
	2013	2010	2013	2010	2013	2010
Ottawa	438	466	3,591	1,852	12.20	25.16
Toronto	1,971	2,085	16,910	9,001	11.66	23.16
Vancouver	1,159	871	12,959	4,924	8.94	17.69
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,568</b>	<b>3,422</b>	<b>33,460</b>	<b>15,777</b>	<b>Average: 10.91</b>	<b>Average: 22.00</b>

Source: Philippine Commission on Elections, 2015

Following the other changes in legislation regarding overseas Filipinos, the Philippines has arguably turned their emigrants into a sort of business whereby the private sector, including recruitment agencies, banks, money transfer companies, communications firms, insurance companies, airlines and real estate agencies, generates huge profits from international migration (Baggio et al., 2008, 123). Specifically, there are approximately 1,200 licensed recruitment agencies, including an unknown number of unlicensed agencies, and generates revenues of over \$400 million a year (Martin & Midgley, 2004, 1550; Asis, 2006). It is important to recognize that migration places significant stress on the individual and the families left behind, and the impact of family separation that occurs. Moreover, migration is often brought on by various economic, social, political, and/or environmental pushes. These variables may be endogenous to poverty in the sense that “international migration and sending money back home may reduce poverty in the developing world, but poverty in the developing world may also affect the number of international migrants being produced and the level of remittances being received” (Adams & Page, 2005, 1646). Moreover, as will be discussed further in Chapter Five, diaspora development is sometimes viewed as being unequally distributed, and risks establishing a dependency for those who are on the receiving end. Nevertheless, the Philippines clearly denies that it relies on overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. This is explicitly stated in *Republic Act no. 8042*, Section 2(c):

While recognizing the significant contribution of Filipino migrant workers to the national economy through their foreign exchange remittances, the State does not promote overseas employment as a means to sustain economic growth and achieve national development. The existence of the overseas employment program rests solely on the assurance that the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Filipino citizen shall not, at any time, be compromised

or violated. The State, therefore, shall continuously create local employment opportunities and promote the equitable distribution of wealth and the benefits of development.

Regardless of the country's legislation, issues stemming from economic hardship and political corruption remain and are not improving, and Filipinos often rely on overseas employment, forming a type of dependency where the government relies on overseas job markets and remittances. Some economic analysts go as far as claiming that such a dependency has evolved into a "Dutch Disease" whereby the economy has become dependent on remittances for its sustained growth, creating "moral hazard problems" in both household and state economic policy-making (Baggio et al., 2008, 151).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have documented how the Philippines views its overseas population and employs a variety of diaspora strategies as transnational tools to engage overseas Filipinos to support and contribute to their home country. Interestingly, while there are several studies that identify the reasons behind the legislation changes, there are no studies on the impact of such changes and how the Filipino diaspora react to such changes and the impact citizenship status has on their various transnational activities and engagements back in the Philippines. By using the case of the Philippines, this research selected participants based on those who carry dual citizenship as well as only Filipino and only Canadian citizenship in order to expand on the role of legal status and attachment regarding home-engagement. Further, the changes to the Filipino citizenship laws in 2003 may have changed the ways in which diaspora engage back home. Therefore, by using the case of the Philippines, we can better understand how diaspora

with and without Filipino citizenship engage in their country of origin, while also being able to explore possible changes that have occurred through amended Filipino citizenship laws regarding diasporic engagement.

In the next chapter, I will examine whether citizenship status contributes to transnational engagement among overseas Filipinos living in Canada. Moreover, I examine why individuals decide to retain, reacquire or drop their Filipino citizenship in order to understand the relationship between citizenship and individual transnational practices.

## **Chapter Five: Methodology**

This chapter focuses on the data collection based on semi-structured interviews with Filipinos living in Canada. Specifically, it elaborates on the interview process and the selection and description of participants.

### **Interview Process**

The primary data for this thesis was collected using semi-structured interviews, given the exploratory nature of this research, allowing for more engagement and an open dialogue between the interview participants and myself. Furthermore, given the small sample size of participants, semi-structured interviews provided a space to explore particular themes and to allow participants more time to speak.

Prior to conducting the semi-structured interviews, a guide was developed and reviewed by the Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board at the University of Ottawa (Appendix A), and translated into Tagalog, as an option for participants to sign. This guide was designed to facilitate the discussion during the semi-structured interviews conducted with Filipinos living in Canada (see Appendix B). The guide aimed to cover a range of topics to spark conversation related to their particular activities and engagements back home. After receiving proper consent from all of the participants to ensure anonymity, I began asking general questions, in English, related to the number of years spent in Canada, their employment status, their family in Canada and in the Philippines, and their relationship and connection with the Philippines. I then proceeded by asking questions related to their citizenship status and tried to grasp the reasons for retaining,

reacquiring or dropping Filipino citizenship. Moreover, the interviews aimed to explore the perceptions regarding citizenship, their home country and the idea of diaspora as development agents. The interviews also covered particular political, economic and social activities, the frequencies of such activities, and whether or not such activities were influenced by citizenship status (see Appendix B: Interview Guide).

As the interviewer, and as an individual who is an outsider to the Filipino community and a non-Tagalog speaker, I recognize that my position may have influenced the responses I received from the interview participants. This may have also influenced the individuals who I spoke with, the questions I asked, and the way in which I conducted my analysis. Overall, I believe that participants felt comfortable speaking with me as the majority of the questions I asked regarded individual perceptions of their country of origin, less on Canada, and as such there was a degree of separation for them. Moreover, half of the interview participants held Canadian citizenship.

My position as a university researcher may have also influenced the participants. However, the majority of interview participants also held university degrees themselves, and were very interested in learning more about my project. In general, my goal was to make individuals who were willing to take the time and speak with me as comfortable as possible. In the end, I am grateful for the openness and trust people had in speaking with me, inviting me into their homes, and inviting me to various social functions.

### **Participant Description**

All of the participants selected for this research were required to meet three basic criteria. Specifically, all of the participants were first generation immigrants (born in the

Philippines), maintained a connection with, and/or sense of belonging to the Philippines, and did not come to Canada through a family reunification program, given that pre-existing research suggests that transnational practices and engagements change and arguably diminish with each generation.

The interviews included:

- 3 participants with Filipino and Canadian (dual) citizenship;
- 6 participants with only Canadian citizenship;
- 3 participants with only Filipino citizenship, who held Permanent Residency in Canada; and
- 2 interviews with representatives from the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa.

The participants were recruited using physical posters around the Ottawa area, through word-of-mouth and snowball methods. Recruitment invitations were posted around Ottawa, mostly in Filipino Churches and grocery stores, and in immigration offices. In addition, digital posters were posted online on various social media platforms, Filipino websites, and Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) discussion boards across Canada. By posting the invitations online, I was able to recruit participants from across Canada, including participants from medium to large cities in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Québec. This also proved to be beneficial since it highlighted the variations across the country related to different engagement activities carried out by the Philippine government across Canada. Furthermore, given that most of my recruitment was online, I may have missed out on recruiting people who do not own computers, including people who have not been in Canada for a long time, individuals who cannot afford computers, and older generations.

The interviews were then conducted either in person or over Skype, typically lasted thirty minutes to an hour, and aimed to empirically explore what the existing literature suggests about the relationship between diaspora engagement and citizenship. While ideally all of the interviews would have been conducted in person, I extended my sample group to individuals across Canada given the difficulty in finding interview participants within the Ottawa-Gatineau region by conducting some of the interviews over Skype. While the sample size remained small, it nevertheless provided a wider range of opinions and experiences from across the country, rather than focusing on a particular region or city.

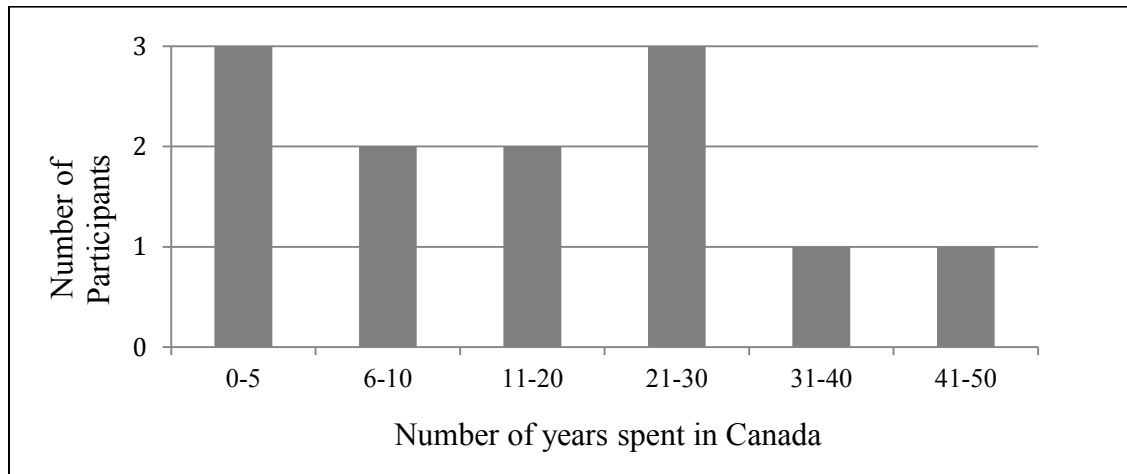
As mentioned, one of the main challenges in conducting the interviews was the difficulty around recruiting participants with dual citizenship. Despite this difficulty, I was able to recruit a number of people who were seriously considering reacquiring their Philippine citizenship, or were already in the process of reacquiring it. This proved to be beneficial since the people who were in the process of reacquiring their Filipino citizenship were more aware of the reasons for reacquiring it, whereas many people who already held dual citizenship could not always remember the specific reasons for either retaining or reacquiring it. This proved to be equally important, since it allowed me to understand the reasoning behind dropping or (re)acquiring their citizenship.

I recognize that this sample of interview participants for this research may have omitted particular demographic groups of the Filipino community in Canada given the difficulty in finding participants. Largely, this thesis left out individuals who come to Canada from the Philippines through the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP). One participant (5) was a retired caregiver, who did not come to Canada through the LCP, but

rather to upgrade her nursing degree from the Philippines. Moreover, while I was in contact with a few potential LCP participants, it was difficult to find the time to arrange for an interview. Similarly, this research did not interview any Foreign Temporary Workers (FTWs) as the focus was on citizenship status and those who would be eligible (permanent residents), able to acquire Canadian citizenship. These limitations point to the need for further research, and looking at other statuses among individuals from the Philippines, such as FTWs, and their individual transnational engagements.

Gender was another consideration initially when recruiting interview participants, however out of the twelve participants, half were female. As described in Chapter 4, emigration from the Philippines is often gendered, with more women moving abroad. This can have an impact on the family structure, both in the host country and the country of origin, and may impact the ways in which the individual living abroad engages back home, particularly with their family and social network.

Another contributing factor to consider is the number of years spent living in Canada. As presented below in Figure 3, the number of years was more-or-less evenly distributed with the average number of years spent in Canada being 14. As will be discussed below, this meant that some of the participants came to Canada before 2003 when they would have had to drop their Filipino citizenship if they acquired Canadian citizenship, while other participants had the choice to keep both.

**Figure 3:** Number of Years Spent Living in Canada

Age is another consideration when looking at the transnational activities among interview participants. Similar to the number of years spent living in Canada, age may also impact the ways in which they engage in translational activities in their country of origin. This may be related to the comfort level they have in their new country of residence, the type of job and position level they hold, and what life stage they are in. For example, a younger person may not have a steady job or the same priorities as someone who is close to retiring. Of the participants that were interviewed the average age was approximately 40 years old.

All of the individuals that I interviewed had a post-secondary education, often from the Philippines. Additionally, the types of employment ranged from engineering, entertainment, nursing and information technology. The main reasons for moving to Canada were for economic reasons, often to find better employment opportunities. This proved to be consistent with the existing literature that states that many Filipinos that immigrate to Canada are highly skilled. Although it was not intended, this constant is beneficial since a person's education and occupational status could possibly impact both the frequency and range of transnational activities.

While most individuals move for economic reasons, I would like to reiterate that many Filipino immigrants deskill themselves in order to find employment (Kelly, 2006, 21). This was the case for one of the interview participants (Participant 5; Canadian citizen), who was a nurse in the Philippines, but worked as a nannie in Canada for her entire career. As one of the leading scholars on the Filipino population in Canada, Philipp Kelly found that generally Filipino men lag substantially behind immigrant men as a whole, whereas Filipina women had average earnings that often exceeded female immigrations in general (2006, 27).<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless, it should be noted that Kelly also found that the percentage of Filipino immigrants in Canada that are unemployed is lower than the overall percentage of the immigrant labour market (2006, 23).

Lastly, while it is beyond the scope of this research, this thesis notes that the Philippines is a diverse country in which different regions experience different economic, political, and social conditions, particularly between rural and urban communities. Initially the interview participants were not chosen based on the region in which they lived in the Philippines, however, it was later discovered that most of the participants came from the Visayas region, particularly from the province of Cebu, closely followed by the Luzon region, and only one participant from the Mindanao region (Figure 4). This may be a point for future research given that the variation of regions could have a possible impact on diaspora engagements.

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<sup>15</sup> Note that Kelly's finding was based on the Filipino population in Ontario, and was only a snapshot of their earnings at one point in time.

Figure 4: Map of the Philippine Regions



Source: Mad Bookings, 2015

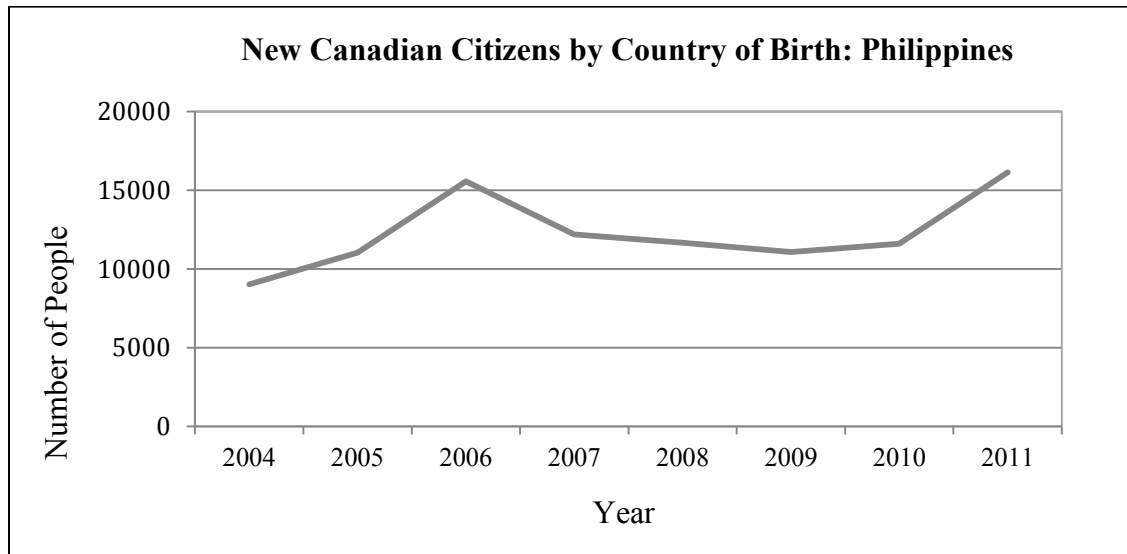
## **Chapter Six: Discussion and Analysis**

This chapter discusses the possible connection between citizenship status and transnational activities as it relates to the initial hypothesis, which anticipated that legal citizenship connects an individual to their home country and opens greater opportunities to engage. But, because transnationalism implies agency, individuals have distinct perceptions of citizenship than what states conceive as a direct relationship. As a result, individuals conceptualize an external citizenship. In turn, this chapter explores participant perceptions of citizenship, including the benefits and reasoning behind acquiring it or not. This will assist with the overall evaluation of the state's top down strategies of allowing dual citizenship among their overseas populations. By using the framework of studying citizenship from the perspective of migrants and the diaspora-engagement grid, this section also explores the reasons for engaging back home, the type of activities, as well as the frequency of engagements in order to understand the impacts of citizenship on individual transnational activities and what other reasons may motivate someone to engage back home in their country of origin. Overall, the aim of this chapter is to analyze whether there is a relationship between citizenship status and diaspora engagement in their home country.

### **Diaspora Perceptions of Citizenship**

The literature presented in this thesis clearly shows that states promote dual citizenship in order to engage with their overseas populations as a type of diaspora strategy. However, how is this state strategy translated and viewed among migrants?

When speaking with individuals about citizenship status it was made clear that people either had to drop their Filipino citizenship prior to 2003 if they naturalized in Canada, or people were unaware of the implications of the 2003 *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Law*, and retained, or intended on retaining their citizenship upon acquiring Canadian status, mostly because it does not require any additional work. Despite the differences in individual experience regarding their citizenship status, all participants knew that the Philippines permits its citizens to hold dual citizenship status. In turn, we are seeing an increasing number of individuals who are becoming dual citizens. Specifically, between 2003 and 2008 more than 51,000 had reacquired their Filipino citizenship” (Asian Migration News, 1-31 August 2008). On the other hand, in 2008 it was said that “some 75 percent of Filipino emigrants have become naturalized citizens of their host countries” (Baggio et al., 2008, 172). More recently, Figure 5 shows an increase in the number of Filipinos acquiring Canadian citizenship. This graph illustrates an increase in Filipinos acquiring Canadian citizenship; however it is difficult to determine the number of these individuals who are retaining or (re) acquiring dual citizenship status. We can assume, however, that the majority of people acquiring Canadian citizenship after 2003 are also keeping their Filipino citizenship since it does not require additional work to maintain it, as both Canada also accepts dual citizenship.

**Figure 5:** Number of Filipinos Acquiring Canadian Citizenship

**Source: CIC, 2012**

Among participants, the main perceptions towards citizenship, specifically dual citizenship, were either positive or indifferent. Most individuals were aware of the Philippine citizenship laws, but most of the participants did not know how the citizenship law affected them and whether or not it was a benefit or a hindrance to acquire it. The main views on the benefits of retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship are presented in Table 2; however, it is important to note that the figure below represents participant perceptions towards citizenship, and does not translate into their actual activities. More about the actual activities among interview participants will be discussed further below.

**Table 2:** Perceived benefits of retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship<sup>16</sup>

<b>Main interests in retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
To own land	5 participants
Maintain sense of connection	4 participants
Intention to move back	1 participant
Ease of travel	3 participants
Voting	1 participant
Unaware of benefits	4 participants

As for the specific responses among participants for why they personally retained or reacquired (or are in the process, or interested in reacquiring) Filipino citizenship, the most common reason related to owning property back home in the Philippines. It was also discussed that land was one of the main ways in which the Philippine government promotes dual citizenship; otherwise there are restrictions on buying land in the Philippines. Specifically, Participant 9, a dual citizen, discussed that “one of the reasons why I [reacquired] my Filipino citizenship was because I bought a piece of land. Foreigners in the Philippines are restricted to only a small lot. And my lot was quite big” (9). Similarly, Participant 5, a Canadian citizen, said, “they encourage people now to get dual citizenship. So if you buy property or do some business there, then you will not get treated like a foreigner.” The restrictions mentioned by most of the participants regarding ownership of land was confirmed with the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa. A senior representative from the Embassy clarified that foreign property ownership cannot exceed 40% of the total owned property in the Philippines (Philippine Embassy, 2015), which may impact a Filipino’s chance of owning land if he or she does not hold Filipino citizenship.

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<sup>16</sup> Participants were able to list more than one benefit.

Another participant, who holds Canadian citizenship, also mentioned the benefits of holding land because “it can be passed on from our ancestors and for sentimental reasons” (Participant 2; Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship). Similarly, Participant 1 mentioned holding land as a “succession plan,” which can provide future generations a place to live, and possibly a source of income depending on what is on the land and whether the individual chooses to rent the property. It is interesting to note here that both Participant 1 and 2 are Canadian citizens, and only Participant 2 owns land/property in the Philippines and has family back home. As such we see that the benefits of particular activities are sometimes perceived rather than actually conducted and they are not always dependent on citizenship status.

We see therefore that land and property were the most common response among participants for why they have their Filipino citizenship, but it was also the most common response for participants who did not have any desire to acquire Filipino citizenship. Moreover, we see that the top down state strategy of promoting dual citizenship for land and property reasons is somewhat successful given that most individuals are aware and see this as one of the benefits of acquiring dual citizenship. Again, however, understanding this benefit from the perspective of the migrant does not always translate into actually acquiring dual citizenship, specifically reacquiring their Filipino status, but it nevertheless does open new possibilities for engaging back home.

Another common reason for retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship while living in Canada was to feel more connected and “welcomed” (Participant 12; dual citizen) in the Philippines and that “you feel more at home. You don’t have to renew or get permission to stay” (Participant 9; dual citizen). Linked to the desire to own land and

feel more connected to the country, most people felt it was necessary to reacquire or retain their Filipino citizenship if they intend to return and move back to the Philippines (Participant 9). This perceived benefit does not necessarily translate into people actually acquiring dual citizenship. Of the participants who were interviewed, all of them maintained a sense of belonging to the Philippines, yet not all of them had dual or Filipino citizenship.

Other participants, who moved to Canada after 2003, mentioned that it was never a consideration to drop the Filipino citizenship. Participant 10, a Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship said, “For me it will be no effort to drop it. Why would I drop it? Dropping would be extra effort.” Interestingly, another reason that was not found within the existing literature was that some people will retain their Filipino citizenship in order to “send their children back to the Philippines for school because it’s cheaper” (Participant 5; Canadian citizen), as well as the ability “to participate in the elections in the Philippines” (Participant 9; dual citizen).

On the other hand, the perceived benefits of holding Canadian citizenship include “finding a job and access health benefits, and to travel to other countries” (Participant 2; Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship). A number of participants also mentioned “it is just easier to use your Canadian Passport” (Participant 12; dual citizen), whereas another participant mentioned that there are some countries in Asia that [Canadians] cannot enter without a visa (Participant 10). Additionally, another participant mentioned that they would want Canadian citizenship for the protection while travelling abroad, for example “if there were a tsunami I wouldn’t want the Philippine government to come pick me up because that would take like two years. I would want the Canadian army to

come get me if there was something wrong” (Ibid). This was one of the reasons why participant 10, who is a Filipino citizen had recently begun the process for acquiring dual citizenship.

There is still a significant lack of awareness around the *2003 Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Law*, as well as the process and benefits of retaining and reacquiring Filipino citizenship. Specifically, there was a lot of confusion on whether they would have to pay taxes if they became a Filipino citizen again, regardless if they owned property or received income in the Philippines. Others were unaware of the benefits, or did not see any benefits to them at this time. One individual, who is a Canadian citizen, mentioned that “at this point I am not opposed to getting Filipino citizenship, but I don’t have any plans to obtain it. For lack of a better term, I wouldn’t know what the benefits are for me” (Participant 4).

It became clear from the discussion on citizenship that most participants are aware of the benefits of acquiring it. Some participants learned about the changes and benefits of citizenship through “word of mouth” (Participant 9; dual citizen), while others through consular visits throughout the province” (Participant 11; dual citizen). Nevertheless, there continues to be a lot of confusion around the actual benefits, and as such, this may be one of the reasons why people are not (re) acquiring their Filipino citizenship, or seeking dual citizenship status. Therefore, in evaluating the strategy from the perspective of the state, we see that there is still a need to clarify such benefits, which may lead to more people, especially for individuals who had to drop status prior to 2003, reacquiring citizenship.

Another conclusion that can be drawn from this discussion can be seen given the fact that many participants interviewed for this research engage in a wide range of

transnational activities, but did not indicate such activities as interests for retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship, or for holding dual citizenship. This can likely indicate to us that citizenship does not explicitly impact an individual's decision to engage in transnational activities; however citizenship does provide greater avenues to engage back in specific activities home, such as owning land, traveling, voting, and moving back home. Nevertheless, it is up to the individual as to whether or not he or she decides to use citizenship for those reasons, which does not seem to always be the case.

### **Views of Diaspora Strategies and the Philippines**

Building off the previous section, I question what the perspectives are among diaspora regarding the impacts of their transnational engagement. Most of the participants were aware that Philippine emigration is big business. All of the interview participants recognized the importance of migration for the Philippines, and one participant, a Canadian citizen, stated that “the biggest export of the Philippines is its people” (Participant 3). As highlighted above the Philippines receives a significant profit from the agencies sending and training migrants to go abroad, but also the money and activities brought back into the country can contribute significantly to the country's GDP. In turn, these diaspora strategies are implemented by the state. But the real question is, do overseas Filipinos recognize such state strategies and do they react to them in the way in which they are intended?

While most of the participants viewed the engagement of the Philippine government with its overseas population as positive, they all nevertheless saw state diaspora strategies as an economic tool, specifically “as a source of income” (Participant

1; Canadian citizen). One particular participant who has dual citizenship was uncertain about how she felt about the way in which the Philippine government engaged and treated its overseas populations. She stated that “in some ways it’s positive because you know they’re getting involved in the country. It can be perceived as negative, because it’s like they’re using us. But not really because we’re still part of the country” (Participant 12). As for the specific forms of Philippine engagement, all of the participants were aware of different activities conducted by the Philippine government targeting towards those who live abroad. The most often cited form of engagement regarded travel and recruiting. All of the individuals were well aware of the enormous number of Filipinos living abroad, and one individual mentioned that “they are training people back home so that they can send them somewhere else for labour, which then they help with the foreign reserves and helps the economy” (Participant 7; Canadian citizen acquiring dual citizenship). Another individual who was a Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship stated:

*Yes, the Filipino government tries to connect with its citizens abroad. Actually, that is what brought me here. That was my introduction to come to Canada. The local Government of Tourism invited me to come to Toronto to talk to the Filipinos to come home and visit for those who have not come home in a long time to visit. (Participant 2)*

The event that Participant 2 speaks of is a common five-day health and wellness expo that promotes travel packages for overseas Filipinos that can also include medical packages for Filipinos to travel back home for dental or medical treatments (Ibid). Other travel engagements include promotion of the Philippines for the Sinulog festival, which invites overseas Filipinos to visit home, where the Philippine government facilitates special accommodation for those who come. Another participant noted, “the Filipino

government is more liberal about when we go home. For example they have that we can bring in more goods than before. I think it is also to boost [the economy], because there is a lot of poverty in the Philippines, so on humanitarian grounds they allow it” (Participant 9; dual citizen). Such extra perks and incentives to go back home clearly illustrate the Balikbayan program for Filipinos living abroad, as discussed in Chapter Four. Similarly, other participants recognized the connection between such programs and citizenship. Specifically, Participant 11, who is a dual citizen, stated “it’s for monetary purposes [that they let dual citizenship]. [People are the] number one exporter of the Philippines, and if they give opportunities to the overseas Filipinos to actually own land in the Philippines it would be a boom to the Philippine economy.” While this participant, who holds dual citizenship, views it as a means for economic promotion, Participant 2, who holds Filipino citizenship, adds another perspective to why the Philippines promotes dual citizenship by stating “for us to come home and connect with our culture and our history, the mayor encourages us to get dual citizenship and for us to keep our Filipino citizenship.” The above two quotes highlight the motivations of the Philippines for allowing dual citizenship as discussed in previous research, and that states create a sense of overseas solidarity to encourage spending. Furthermore, one participant recognized that “Filipino Hero” was a “marketing strategy, because they really encourage people to send money to their families and just also to give recognition to them since they have contributed a lot to the economy” (Ibid).

When discussing whether or not participants feel pressure from the Filipino government to engage in transnational activities, it was noted that none of the participants felt pressure from the Filipino government (Participant 10; Filipino citizen acquiring dual

citizenship). Rather, most of the pressure came from various Filipino groups, family and friends living in the Philippines. One participant mentioned that alumni groups in the Philippines will often “call and ask for help. They try to make you feel like you have this sense of responsibility. But it’s just a Filipino thing...to take care of [one another]” (Participant 12; dual citizen). Another participant who holds Filipino citizenship said that he feels pressure from his sister when she says “oh you’re earning more, you be the one paying for that” (Participant 10), whereas another participant who holds Canadian citizenship feels obligated by his mother to send money and goods to the Philippines (Participant 7). From this, we observe that individuals, regardless of their citizenship status feel pressure to engage in transnational activities with their home county, but for family reasons and not legal reasons, as initially anticipated.

### **Connection with the Philippines**

While the discussion thus far has focused on the perceptions among participants of legal citizenship, it is important to also discuss the other aspect of Kim Barry’s (2006) external citizenship: the informal lived experiences of participation in national life. This can be further expressed as a type of perceived citizenship, or rather a form of informal membership. Those who were interviewed all maintained a strong connection, or sense of belonging to the Philippines in which they participated in national and public life, however, this connection with the Philippines varied greatly. To understand this sense of membership and connection, participants were asked questions regarding their feelings towards their home country and how people living in the Philippines perceived them. This was done given that “citizenship is embedded in, as well as constitutive of,

community, and its legitimacy depends on that community's approval" (Barry, 2006, 25). This can be applied to both legal and perceived/identity forms of citizenship. With legal citizenship we see the national community, or the state recognizing citizens, but with regard to the second form of external citizenship, it comes down to the individual themselves, the personal ties and the efforts made to engage with the national community, independent of the state (Ibid, 26).

With this in mind, the individuals interviewed for this research responded that their interactions and feelings towards the Philippines while living in Canada were largely positive, often because of reasons related to their nationality and also because most had family still living there. Specifically, when asked how they were perceived by Filipinos living in the Philippines, four individuals said that their friends and family viewed them the same, while eight participants said that their friends and family viewed them differently since living in Canada. Nevertheless, there was no link between people's perspectives and the participant's citizenship status, meaning that people may see individuals differently once they move abroad, regardless of whether they keep the citizenship of their home country. One interview participant, who had Canadian citizenship and was applying for dual citizenship stated, "I grew up there, but I haven't seen those folks in a long time, so sometimes I feel like a guest. You can sense that there is some differences in the treatment" (Participant 7). Another participant, who had Filipino citizenship, expanded on this point and suggested that a change in perspective often happens because of the assumed social status change. Further, "when you move abroad, people think you have money and you're making a lot of money. So they expect you to bring money and some gifts and things like that. People think that you have a

better life than what they have, and they would look at you like a different person. Maybe it's because you've been influenced here" (Participant 2).

Another Filipino citizen highlighted the use of communication and the ease of connecting with the Philippines by saying, "You know what is great? Facebook. If you're away from your friends, even if we haven't seen each other in years, there is no awkwardness it was just like yesterday" (Participant 10); nevertheless, he mentioned that it could be different with his family, "I think they will see me differently. I remember people visiting us when I lived there who lived abroad and it was just different" (Ibid). Comments such as these were fairly common among all of the participants who felt as though people back home viewed them differently; however, regardless of how their friends and family view them, all participants felt connected to the Philippines since "no matter what it is your country" (Participant 6). Notably, this previous comment was made by a Canadian citizen who is in the process of acquiring dual citizenship, which can highlight that this sense of connection does not necessarily cease to exist or diminish once an individual becomes naturalized in her country of residence.

### **Engaging in Transnational Activities**

Now that we have explored the perceptions of citizenship and connections to the Philippines, let us recall that transnationalism can be referred to as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement, and emphasizes that many immigrants today build social fields that cross geographic, cultural, and political borders (Basch et al, 1994, 8). Among these multi-stranded relations, there is no doubt that the largest tie between home

and destination country is economic. Similarly, it is no secret that citizenship retaining and reacquisition law of the Philippines was passed to attract investments by permanent settlers (Baggio et al., 2008). Table 3 applies the analytical grid outlined in Chapter Three regarding the scale and scope of participants in their activities and engagements back in the Philippines. Each individual, as identified using their participant number, is documented in the table below to highlight their level and frequency of engagement in the Philippines.

**Table 3:** Transnational Activities Among Participants

Participant Number	Citizenship Status	Frequency	Diversity	Level of Engagement	Type of Transnational Activity		
					Economic	Socio-cultural	Political
1	Canadian	Irregular	Selective	National	Facilitates Fil-Can Business partnerships	--	--
3	Canadian	Regular	Selective	Individual	Sends money to family	--	--
4	Canadian	Irregular	Selective	Individual	Send money to family	--	--
5	Canadian	Regular	Comprehensive	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box; Owns property	Fundraises for students in the Philippines	--
8	Canadian	Regular	Comprehensive	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box; Owns property	Religious group trips	Voted in PH election in 2010, when PH citizen
6	Canadian, acquiring dual citizenship	Irregular	Comprehensive	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box; Owns property	Alumni groups and mission trips	Hypothetical yes

7	Canadian, acquiring dual citizenship	Regular	Comprehensive	Individual	Sends money to friend; Sends Balikbayan box	Alumni group	Hypothetical yes
2	Filipino, acquiring dual citizenship	Regular	Selective	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box; owns property	--	Hypothetical yes
10	Filipino, acquiring dual citizenship	Irregular	Selective	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box	--	--
9	Dual citizen	Regular	Selective	Individual	Sends money to friend; Sends Balikbayan box; Owns property	--	--
11	Dual citizen	--	--	--	--	--	May vote in 2016 PH. election
12	Dual citizen	Irregular	Selective	Individual	Sends money to family; Sends Balikbayan box	--	Hypothetical yes

*Frequency and Diversity of Engagements*

What is apparent from Table 3 is that there are five participants who engage in irregular activities, meaning that they engage in unpredictable activities. Of these five individuals, three are Canadian citizens (one of which is acquiring dual status), one is a Filipino citizen and one has dual citizenship. An additional six individuals engage in some type of transnational activity on a frequent and predictable basis. Within this group, four are Canadian citizens (one of which is acquiring dual status), one has Filipino status and is acquiring dual citizenship and another already has dual citizenship. From these findings we see an almost even split between citizenship status and frequency of transnational engagements. Therefore, it is difficult to conclude whether and how citizenship status may impact the frequency of activities as we see almost the same number of individuals participating in regular and irregular activities, with varying citizenship statuses.

It is also worth noting that Participant 11, a dual citizen who identified as belonging to the Filipino diaspora and as maintaining a strong connection to the Philippines, did not engage in any type of transnational engagement. When asked why he did not engage back home, he replied that his mother, who still lives in the Philippines does not need any assistance. Moreover, he would rather help organizations here in Canada than in the Philippines given that it would likely benefit him more here. Nevertheless, he did mention that he would be interested in participating in the upcoming national election in 2016. From these findings we begin to see that there are other variables and connections, such as family, that may likely be more important in determining whether an individual will engage back home compared to legal citizenship.

In addition to the frequency of engagement among participants, 11 participants engaged in some type of economic activity. However, only four of them participated in an additional arena, meaning that only four individuals engaged in comprehensive activities. Interestingly, all of the individuals who participated in more than one transnational arena (i.e. economic, political, socio-cultural) were Canadian. Of these four individuals, three also participated in regular or frequent activities; but more importantly, two of these participants are in the process of acquiring their dual citizenship. One possible justification as to why we see Canadians participating in more regular and in more diverse ways could be related to the number of years spent living in Canada. Specifically, the average number of years living in Canada among these four participants is 21.5. As such, all of these participants moved to Canada before 2003 when they were forced to drop their Filipino citizenship in order to acquire Canadian citizenship. From this, the number of years spent in Canada likely influences the scope of activities given they may feel more settled and able to engage with the Philippines in more ways. Nevertheless, this disproves what the literature says about individuals engaging less with their home country once they become naturalized in their new country (see Cortina and Ochoa-Reza, 2008, 18). Moreover, although citizenship opens new possibilities for engagement, from the interviews, I argue that dual citizenship does not necessarily influence the range of activities conducted in their home country.

It is important to note here that the range and number of activities relates to participating in an economic, social and political arena, and not the overall number of activities conducted back home in their country of origin. If the latter were to be

examined, we would see that all but three participants engaged in more than one activity, although most of which were conducted in only in one arena.

### *Level of Engagement*

It is also interesting to note that of all of the activities conducted among the participants, all were at the individual level, except for one individual, although this was largely because of her profession and less on a personal level. When participants were asked about the choice between sending money to family members or directly in the hands of someone they know versus sending money through a charitable organization working in the Philippines, the response was unanimous. Everyone, despite their citizenship status, said that they “prefer sending money to a direct individual who needs the money” (Participant 7; Canadian citizen) because “you want to help, but you want to make sure it goes in the right hands” (Participant 10, Filipino citizen) and “where it is supposed to go” (Participant 6 & 10). Most of the comments were made in the context of “lack of confidence in how they do things, especially with donations” (Participant 10). Another individual who holds dual citizenship stated “as much as I would like to help with humanitarian crisis, if I were to give \$100 we have doubt that any of that would actually go to the people that it is intended for” (Participant 11). Because of “the corruption with the government and different organizations” (Participant, 8), there is a significant lack of trust. One suggestion that was made by one participant, who holds Filipino citizenship, was that “what we need is not more money; it’s more efficient use of those funds” (Participant 10). The same participant continued to explain that

*With that much money, we could have built everyone a house, instead there is nothing. Rather mayors will spend money to put stickers on bags of food that*

*they'll give people so that when it comes to election time then they'll get additional votes. So bring your money, otherwise it'll get lost. (Ibid)*

Another participant, a Canadian citizen, took action into her own hands after the Mount Pinatubo volcano in 1991, where her aunt got together and sent her brother who was living in the Philippines money in order to “buy lots of rice from the farmers [...] in order to give and spread it around, and also to buy a cow and then to slaughter it and give it to the people” (Participant 5). This was precisely because she felt that giving money to her brother would be more effective than sending it through a charity or aid organization.

It is worth mentioning that all of the participants go through organizations such as Western Union, or local Filipino remittance offices, and also bring money with them when traveling to the Philippines. However, those with Filipino citizenship are allowed to bring more money with them when traveling back to the Philippines and are exempt from tax free duty, under the Balikbayan Program under Republic Act (RA) 6768 which encourages overseas Filipinos to visit the Philippines. Additionally, when asked whether or not the surcharge fees for sending remittances would impact them sending money, all of the participants stated that it would not impact their decision to send money given that it comes down to the fact that their family needs money. Still though, decreasing the remittance fees would likely mean more money being sent to the families rather than to pay for the fees.

### *Types of Transnational Engagements*

#### a) Financial Remittances

This research confirms that financial remittances are by far the most common and widespread transnational activity. Among the participants interviewed for this thesis, only

two individuals did not send remittances back to the Philippines. One individual does not send money back home because “his only relative living in the Philippines” (his mother) was “quite settled” (Participant 11). Interestingly enough, this person also has dual citizenship. The other Participant (1) who did not send financial remittances also stated that most of her immediate family either lives in Canada or the United States, and therefore she does not send money. Notably, she is a Canadian citizen and has lived in Canada for more than 40 years and has no desire to acquire dual citizenship status as she does not intend to move back, and because her immediate family all live in North America.

Among all of the other participants, regardless of their citizenship status, the primary reasons for sending money back home was to send their children, or family’s children to school given that education in the Philippines is largely privately run. Other common reasons for sending money were to support family members to pay for health care, general bills and for home maintenance. These benefits of remittances can significantly help families sustain themselves; however from what was discussed in the interviews, it is rare that “they would ever save it—it comes and goes fairly quickly” (Participant, 10). To this extent, some participants had concerns about the use of remittances for non-productive purposes, however, it has been noted that “families above a certain income threshold are found to use remittances for investment (in the case of the Philippines, in human capital that would make it easier to migrate abroad), while those below this threshold use it for subsistence consumption” (Yang, 2003, 345). From this statement we can see how remittances can have different impacts on people’s lives depending on their existing financial situation; however, regardless of the situation the

impact of remittances should not be downplayed. Confirming what was mentioned in the literature view, some participants underlined the importance of remittances and stated that overseas Filipinos “were able to save our country from bankruptcy because of the Filipinos who sent money back home” (Participant 2; Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship status).

Although this research largely focuses on the positive aspects of migration and citizenship, one participant mentioned an important concern. It was one participant, whose wife’s father has been working in the shipping business for over 40 years, who mentioned “those who work overseas, yes they are sending money but I think it interrupts time with their families. Those are the things that we cannot quantify. But I think there is still an impact, but it’s not just money” (Participant 3), and it’s not always positive. This individual, who is a Canadian citizen, highlights a point that is often ignored when discussing migration and development, given that such diaspora activities, mostly remittances, are often portrayed as largely beneficial, however it does not illustrate the conditions under which the money is acquired. This is highlighted in a study of intergenerational mobility among Filipino youth in Canada, where Phillip Kelly (2014) notes the negative impacts of family separation during the migration process. In Canada, separation can be attributed largely to the time and eligibility considerations<sup>17</sup> with the family reunification program. However, it is often assumed that individuals moving abroad have weighted out the pros and cons and have made individual choices to often move away from family members, despite being far away from a close family member.

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<sup>17</sup> An individual must be either a Canadian citizen or Permanent Resident to qualify to sponsor a family member (CIC, 2014).

## b) Community Pooling

A similar activity that was discussed in the preliminary research relates to organizations that mobilize migrant-worker resources for productive use and community development, such as *Unlad Kabayan Migrant Service Foundation & Social Enterprise*. This Foundation pools migrant savings, helps to identify appropriate investments, and facilitates credit applications with the objective of creating new jobs through sustainable businesses (Munzele Maimbo & Ratha, 2005). When asked about similar initiatives, only one participant spoke about pooling resources. In particular, Participant 10, a Filipino citizen who is in the process of acquiring dual status, had heard of the idea of pooling remittances, but he said that it is more common for groups to organize fundraising and community events. Specifically, “[Filipinos] love doing fundraising events, like little concerts, even pageants. We’re very creative when it comes to fundraising events.” After following several dozen Canadian Filipino social media groups, I began receiving numerous newsletters that highlighted Participant 10’s comments on fundraising, which most of them were to send money back to the Philippines, whether for religious holidays, humanitarian relief and/or natural disasters.

## c) Investments

Separate from financial remittances, another area of interest linked to the transnational economic engagements relates to the investments among Filipino diaspora in the Philippines. When speaking to the Philippine Embassy in Canada it was clear that they try to promote investments in the Philippines through various channels including through the promotion of dual citizenship. This was reiterated by several of the

participants by stating that the Philippine government “will host trade shows where they would present business opportunities” (Participant 9; dual citizen) to Filipinos living abroad. In general, participants did not have a lot to say on investing in the Philippines, although one individual, who holds dual status, thinks that dual citizenship “will bring some money, because if you are a Filipino citizen and you have some money here, you might be more willing to invest if you’re a Filipino citizen” (Ibid). Interestingly however, the same individual does not invest in the Philippines given that “investment in the Philippines could be affected by the corruption in the government. So no matter how they promote that aspect, until it is addressed then there is less of an incentive to invest in the country—not even for Filipinos” (Ibid).

#### d) Property Ownership

Another way that the Philippine government promotes investment and spending in the Philippines is through tourism and property ownership. Out of the twelve interview participants, nine own property (house, condo or land), among which two participants rent out the property, one has not yet decided whether she will rent it out, and the six others all have family living on the property.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, out of the nine participants who own property in the Philippines three held dual citizenship (Participants 12, 11, 9), five held only Canadian citizenship (Participants 8, 7, 6, 5, 4), and only one had Filipino citizenship (Participant 10). Nevertheless the one participant holding Filipino citizenship and two who held Canadian citizenship are in the process of acquiring dual citizenship. Despite the Philippines promoting dual citizenship as a means for owning property in the Philippines, we still see many people, regardless of their status, owning property.

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<sup>18</sup> All of the participants owning property in the Philippines intend to move back at some point.

Having an individual, particularly a family member living in or on their property is also fairly common among the individuals interviewed and can be seen as a social and economic benefit given that that individual is provided with shelter and maybe associated social status. Further, some of the participants also see their “property as an investment”. Specifically, two participants, both dual citizens stated, “I would not be opposed to renting the place. Some of our neighbours they have someone manage their house in the Philippines and get commission on renting it”(Participant 11). The other individual left his land to some locals and gave them “the right to harvest the coconuts until I come back” (Participant 9). Another participant, who holds Canadian citizenship, mentioned that some people, although not her, “have properties there and families there that they intend to give their properties to, as succession planning and so on” (Participant 1).

#### e) Travel

Similarly, the Philippine government also promotes travelling and retiring back in the Philippines as another means of bringing money back into the country. Baggio et al. (2008, 145) found that from “1995 to 2004, tourism-related expenditures by overseas Filipinos reached US\$1.6 billion (or an annual average of US\$160 million).” The country also has several retiring campaigns and is building retirement villages for overseas Filipinos and foreigners. All of the participants who were interviewed for this research have travelled back to the Philippines and continue to do so. Moreover, all of the individuals typically stay in the Philippines for approximately 1 month. As previously mentioned, the Philippine government also promotes travel through trade shows and promotion of cultural tours and medical packages in the Philippines. Out of all of the

participants, only three individuals travelled back to the Philippines on a cultural trip, two of which held dual citizenship, whereas the third was in the process of acquiring it. Specifically, one individual travelled with a large group to tour the country, while the other two went on mission trips to the Philippines to provide humanitarian assistance. Moreover, two of the participants had travelled back to the Philippines with their church groups, in particular two who held dual citizenship (Participants 9 & 12). In other cases, travelling to the Philippines means seeing family and friends. Of those interviewed, eleven out of twelve people intend to retire back in the Philippines, regardless of their citizenship status. But those who hold dual or Filipino citizenship believe that it will be easier for them to retire there. Given that all of the participants travel back to the Philippines often, or at least intend to, therefore demonstrates why the Philippines is so interested in promoting travel back home, however, this activity is not directly related to the individuals citizenship status. For some individuals it makes traveling easier, but this activity is not dependent on an individual's citizenship status.

#### f) Balikbayan Boxes

The people interviewed suggested that the balikbayan Boxes can portray a change in social status for those who stay in the Philippines while a family member lives abroad. Moreover, the boxes can be seen as an item that produces “hybrid cultural constructions and statements about social success in Canada as an effort to build and advance social position in the Philippines” (Basch et al, 1994, 29). From these two statements, we begin to understand how balikbayan boxes can be used in order to extend the Filipino transnational engagements by building on family networks and gift giving. It can also

bridge a connection between people living abroad and in the Philippines. Often families will save a box and continue to fill it throughout the year, and wait for holidays and for sales and then send them shortly thereafter. Most of the individuals I spoke with send one or two boxes a year; however, unlike remittances, people are more selective when sending a box given the fees associated with them.<sup>19</sup> Several interview participants also explained that the boxes started because of the cultural notion of gift-giving in the Philippines and that “when you go to the Philippines you don’t just go yourself you bring gifts for the family” (Participant 3; Canadian citizen). In turn, the boxes can represent both an economic and socio-cultural transnational activity.

Sending a box can be done by anyone, regardless of their citizenship status, but interestingly, of the individuals interviewed only three Canadians not in the process of acquiring dual citizenship, and one individual who holds dual status do not send boxes. Of these four individuals, two mentioned that they either did not have anyone to send the boxes to, one mentioned that the price was a factor for not sending a box, and another said that it was normally the women who send boxes. Notably, all of the other individuals who send a box (and who were currently, or in the process of acquiring dual citizenship) have close family living back home.

On an individual level, the balikbayan boxes can have economic advantages given that “it helps people use things that otherwise they would have to buy” (Participant 9; dual citizen). As mentioned, this could be related to food items, clothing, and school items. On a larger, national scale, “a regular flow of such boxes leaves every day from

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<sup>19</sup> On average it was said to cost approximately \$100 to send a box from Canada to the Philippines, depending on where the box is being sent to in the Philippines.

seven to eight major Filipino shipping companies, admitted into the Philippines almost tax free” (Basch et al, 1994, 3).

g) Online Forums

While almost all of the participants wish to move back to the Philippines at some point in their life, 10 out of the 12 participants actively participate (in person) in a Filipino group here in Canada. Moreover, while all of the participants follow some sort of online Filipino group, often organized around religion, a Philippine region, sport, professional associations, or Philippine university/school alumni group. The level at which people participated in online activities varied significantly, but often included reading Filipino news online. One participant mentioned, “I do read the newspapers online. I don’t watch pop culture stuff. I find it a waste of my time. It’s pretty much how I keep up. I also talk to my grandma and my relatives every weekend at night. So that’s how we sync up, and say what the issues are here today, and about the presidents trying to run. But mostly it’s online” (Participant 7; Canadian citizen).

As discussed in previous chapters, such an exchange of information means that there is a possibility of transferring social remittances, which “can bring back home radical critiques that not only challenge the composition of the leadership of the home country, but that also raise fundamental questions about the structures of class, gender, and power within those countries” (Basch et al, 1994, 300). This can be transferred through travel, but I also believe it can be transferred through regular communication networks either formally or informally. Given that the participant above and others discuss various issues, including national political issues with family over the phone or

online means that such discussions could influence both parties' views on the topic being discussed. This "transfer of social status, consumer goods, and information on social relations is critical to social mobility and the restructuring of class positions at both ends of the transnational migration continuum" (Ibid, 270). Likewise, all of the participants, except one, had relatives in the Philippines with whom they spoke with regularly over the Internet and/or phone. In turn we can see that the act of transferring social remittances is not determined by citizenship, but rather whether that individual has family in the Philippines. Similar to many of the other transnational activities, participating in online forums and social media is not dependent on their citizenship status. Again, we see the importance of social networks and connections that facilitate these activities.

#### h) Voting

While an individual must hold Filipino citizenship to vote in Philippine elections, those who did not were nevertheless asked about hypothetical voting habits during the interviews. As such, those who wanted to move back were found to be more likely to vote in the election given that they had more at stake in who is President. This can be related back to the earlier points on how individuals are more likely to participate in national politics if they have a sense that it will personally impact them; by considering to move back, the national politics may therefore be more of a concern for those individuals.

Regardless of whether the individual was actually allowed to vote back home, all participants indicated a common concern in the Philippines: the lack of trust in the Philippine government regarding the voting system. The idea of voting or not voting because an individual does not trust the voting system was divided. In particular, one

participant, a Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship status, said that “if I see that there is a lot of corruption then that would influence me more to really make sure that I vote that year (Participant 10); whereas another individual who holds dual citizenship says that he does not vote given that “there is a lot of dishonesty in the voting system, and corruption is so engrained in the political parties. It’s like choosing between less corrupt and more corrupt” (Participant 9; dual citizen). Moreover, I was told by one participant, who did vote in a Filipino election when he had Filipino citizenship<sup>20</sup> that “it wasn’t too difficult, but for security I was concerned with that little piece of paper. I didn’t know if they didn’t like that candidate then they’d throw it away [...] if it was more secure, say online, then I would be more confident in the vote. But whether they count it or not, I don’t care I’ll just send my vote” (Participant 10). The latter point is also interesting to note since the participant states that he doesn’t care, he’ll just send his vote, meaning that he feels a “sense of entitlement, like it is my right, and when I go back I want to know that my country is being run properly” (Ibid). Moreover, he feels as though if he were not to vote “someone else will. Whether they count it or not it is my right and on principle I send my vote” (Ibid). Similarly, another participant, a Canadian citizen, also noted that he would be more likely to “vote because of the corruption in order to get rid of it” (Participant 8). Other participants did not feel comfortable participating in overseas voting given that they did not feel as though they knew enough about the candidates, specifically, one participant who holds dual citizenship stated “I don’t know any of the candidates. It doesn’t seem like any of them are in a position to run the country. So in other words, why bother” (Participant 11)?

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<sup>20</sup> Participant 10 intends to vote again in Filipino elections once he acquires his Filipino-Canadian citizenship.

From what has been stated so far, we can see that there is a true divide among those who were interviewed regarding overseas voting. Given the upcoming 2016 national election in the Philippines, and the lower percentage of voter turnout, the Philippine government has been heavily active in promoting voting for overseas Filipinos. In turn, time will tell if their efforts will influence the outcome of voter registration and participation.

Political participation nevertheless is also much more than just voting. In particular, it can include freedom of speech, lobbying and advocacy, and the freedom to participate in public affairs. While none of the interviewed participants openly support Filipino political parties financially, there were other ways in which they were involved in Philippine political arena. Notably, some of the participants were involved in local migrant right events and protests to raise awareness around the human right abuses ongoing in many countries towards live-in caregivers and other forms of temporary foreign work. Another example of political participation that was conducted following all of the interviews was a no remittance day, which was held on August 28, 2015 around the world in an effort to stop remittances to the Philippines that day. This was intended to show the Philippine government the impact overseas Filipinos have on the country, and that their labour and money should not be taken for granted. It was also done to protest the recent national customs policy that changed the regulations around balikbayan boxes, which resulted in an increased number of boxes being opened, and items being stolen.

Related to such political participation, some scholars have argued that “prior to their moves abroad, immigrants were neglected and even repressed, their exit eventually endowed them with the political voice that they never had before, as a direct result of the

efforts of home governments striving to preserve the migrants' loyalty to their country" (Portes, 2003, 878). In other words, migrants may feel more empowered to speak up against particular issues that they would not have been able to while living in the Philippines. In the context of the Philippines, this could possibly be related to the corruption that is seen in the country, as highlighted by the 2015 Corruption Index where the Philippines scored 35 (where 0 is highly corrupt and 100 is very clean) (Transparency International, 2015). This participation may be facilitated further when an individual has dual citizenship, or their natural citizenship given their legal connection to their home country. Again, we can see how citizenship status may facilitate greater opportunities to engage back home.

This engagement may not only contribute to possible political changes in the country, but may also promote social change. When discussing this with a few interview participants however, it was made clear that "when people move from the Philippines, they do not expect to change their country. That is not why we come here. It's more of a personal reason" (Participant 3), typically economic. This individual holds only Canadian citizenship, and may not feel the obligation that was discussed above by some of the individuals who hold dual or Filipino status.

### **State versus Family**

It is apparent from this research that dual citizenship does not necessarily promote transnational engagement in that ways that were initially expected, although, it does facilitate greater opportunities for individuals to engage back home. Most of the participants were clear in explaining their reasons for engaging back home. From what

we have seen family was one of the main reasons regardless whether an individual intended to move back to the Philippines. In particular, two participants, both of whom only had Canadian citizenship, “had no desire” (Participant 4) to move back because most of their family currently lives in Canada. This was further illustrated when a participant told me that she was going to apply for dual citizenship, “but I didn’t bother because my parents passed away. I was planning to because I wanted to go home and see my parents as much as I could” (Participant 5).

In terms of sending remittances, most of the participants only send money directly to family members with only three individuals sending money back to non-family members. As expected, other non-legal ties such as family facilitate engagement back home. Participants commonly said that they “want to help their family, and not necessarily the country” and it is “not so much about patriotism. [...] If their families are back home, they’re going to stay involved with their family. That’s what they send money back to the Philippines” (Participant 12; dual citizen). Likewise, “because we have very strong family [...] and because of the poverty at home we usually send money to relatives and even friends” (Participant 9; dual citizen). As discussed above with regard to remittances and balikbayan boxes some individuals felt pressure to send money or gifts to the Philippines and that it is expected that people abroad help their family (Participant 2; Filipino citizen acquiring dual citizenship).

Regardless of the reasons why people choose to engage back home, it is still worth noting that these individuals are maintaining a connection and relationship back home with the Philippines. Nevertheless, it is less about the individual’s legal citizenship status, and more about their familial and cultural relationships and the desire to maintain

ties with their home country. Legal citizenship, through the perspective of the participants, was seen as being promoted to facilitate further ways to engage back home; however this did not translate into people engaging more because of their citizenship status. Rather participants were overall relatively active in conducting activities back home, regardless of their citizenship status.

Membership is still valued in the Philippines, but as this research suggests, rather than legal citizenship, membership is tied to the cultural definition of *Balikbayan* that crosses borders and connects individuals back home. Therefore, we must not view citizenship solely as the prescribed legal status but rather also as an informal perceived sense of belonging and inclusion. Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous chapter, this has been referred to as diasporic or external citizenship, which induces openness and prevents narrow nationalism because it elicits attachment to both the homeland and the country of residence (Fitzgerald, 2002) and creates a perceived bond between diaspora and homeland. As such, we see that citizenship does play a role in facilitating transnational activities, just not in the initial legal sense to which this thesis initially predicted.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has examined the 12 semi-structured interviews with Filipino migrants living in Canada in the context of the existing literature to determine whether dual citizenship promotes transnational engagement. While it is clear that the individuals who participated in this research were involved in transnational activities that were conducted here in Canada and had implications in the Philippines, overall their actions

were not determined by their citizenship status. Rather it appears that an individual's social and family ties to the Philippines had a greater impact on whether they engaged with the Philippines. Through diaspora engagements back home, the most common form of transnational activities relate to economic engagements, whether it be occasionally traveling home, sending remittances or a balikbayan box or owning some type of property in the Philippines.

Although it may not be intended, diaspora engagements can have real impacts at different levels in the country of origin. Although this thesis examined the frequency and diversity of transnational activities, diaspora engagements “even when enacted occasionally, are of great importance to the development of home nations. Remittances and migrant investments are no longer a marginal phenomenon, but have become one of the pillars of the financial stability and prospects for the development of sending countries” (Portes, 2003, 888). One participant views Filipinos as development actors given that “we have more means, we're more in touch with humanitarian efforts, and we're more informed about what is going on back home and people ask if you've sent money to those kinds of issues that other people wouldn't know about” (Participant 10). While diaspora may not always explicitly see themselves as development actors, “in the aggregate they can modify the fortunes and the cultures of these towns and even of the countries of which they are part [...] and multiplied by the thousands, translate into a flow of money that can become a prime source of foreign exchange for sending countries, into investments that sustain the home construction industry in these nations, and into new cultural practices that radically modify the value systems and everyday lives of entire regions” (Portes, 2003). In turn, the ramifications of such actions, should it be

economic, social or political and regardless of the frequency and scope, should not be underestimated. Moreover, even if transnational engagement is said to diminish over time and generation, “as long as south-north migration continues and globalization persists, there is no reason to expect that transnational living will disappear” (Guarnizo, 2003, 691).

## **Chapter Seven: Rethinking Citizenship, Migration and Transnational Engagements**

This thesis aimed to highlight the relationship between diaspora, citizenship and transnational engagement. In doing so, the research explored past and present literature to expand on this relationship and to discuss existing gaps. Despite the fact that states are increasingly allowing dual citizenship as a means to engage and connect with their overseas populations, there has been little research on individuals' citizenship status and the actual impacts it could have on diaspora activities in engaging back home. Therefore this thesis examined the question of whether dual citizenship facilitates diaspora home-engagements.

### **Study Findings**

This research has made it apparent that legal citizenship does not have as strong of an impact on migrants' transnational activities as initially anticipated. Initially this research anticipated that Filipino migrants living in Canada who held dual citizenship would engage more often than those who do not for reasons related to nationalism and identity, to maintain a connection with the Philippines and out of a sense of duty. While citizenship status did open the possible avenues for migrants to engage back home in regard to a range of activities, individuals did not participate in transnational activities solely based on their legal citizenship status. Rather individuals engaged in their country of origin because of their social connections. In other words, legal citizenship did not have as great of an impact promoting transnational activities compared to the informal membership, or external citizenship, participants held with the Philippines. This is

explicitly seen when participants indicated that they felt more connected to the Philippines because of their identity and nationality. Furthermore, it was also made apparent that some participants felt obligated to engage with the Philippines as a means of maintaining a connection; specifically they felt responsible to engage with their family still living in the Philippines. In particular, there was a strong connection between those who had family members back home and those who engaged in regular and comprehensive activities. Moreover, those who felt a strong social bond to the Philippines also engaged more often than those who did not, even if they held (legal) dual citizenship. As such, these connections appear to have had the greatest impacts on individual transnationalism, whereas no individual felt pressure or a sense of duty to participate in transnational activities with the Philippines out of legal obligation. Therefore, family relationships and sense of external/perceived membership appears to have greater influence over an individual's engagement with the Philippines.

Although this research focused on the individual actions of diaspora and their activities back home, we must still recognize the role of the state in this transnational process and its attempt to (re)connect with its overseas citizens through various diaspora strategies. Through the various strategies, states deploy the language of nationalism precisely because migrants are outside state territorial borders but within the boundaries of the imagined nation (Fitzgerald, 2002, 4) in an attempt to promote engagement back home. This is facilitated by providing particular incentives, such as allowing individuals to reacquire Filipino citizenship and hold dual statuses. While these strategies can benefit individuals in terms of increased rights and protection, state influence across borders may not be as strong as initially perceived. This thesis determined, through a range of semi-

structured interviews, that external citizenship, with regard to social and familial ties, has a greater influence in facilitating transnational engagements than legal citizenship status.

The implications of these findings are at the state level and on an individual level. From the perspective of the state, the Philippines needs to recognize that they do not have as much control over their overseas citizens as they may have anticipated by allowing dual citizenship as a state diaspora strategy. This pushes us to acknowledge transnationalism in a formal and informal level, and different forms of membership across borders. Furthermore, the Philippines may see fewer overseas Filipinos participating in National elections, as citizenship is not typically tied to other transnational activities, and individuals may not be acquiring it for the reasons anticipated by the government. Lastly, these results also highlight that individual actions may not decrease or stop once they have become naturalized or acquired citizenship of their destination country, but rather it is likely that we will see an end to their transnational activities once the informal ties to their country of origin have been severed.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings listed above, states must recognize what citizenship means to individuals to develop an effective diaspora strategy that will impact the actions of those living abroad. States must also re-evaluate the state diaspora strategy of allowing dual citizenship and understand how overseas citizens perceive their home country, as this plays a large role in determining how an individual engages back home. In theory, legal citizenship may mean one thing with specific rights and duties, but ultimately it is employed on an individual basis, and people will interpret it how they want, regardless of how it is intended. In turn, the Philippines could increase awareness around state diaspora

strategies and benefits of dual citizenship, and build a stronger relationship of trust between its government and its overseas populations.

By looking at the personal experiences of the interview participants, this research shows the importance of social and family connections among diaspora when it comes to individual transnational activities. As such, the Philippine government should focus more on the individual and community based investments and incentives to increase engagements among their overseas populations. An example of this could be taken from the Mexican 3x1 programme, whereby the Mexican government matches overseas remittances for community development initiatives. This can be taken one step further, with possible partnerships with Canada, whereby Canada recognizes the importance of transnational activities in order to facilitate greater participating in economic, social and political activities in countries of origin.

To address the concern of corruption among government and Non-government lead development initiatives, additional efforts could also be made for greater transparency to demonstrate where their funds and donations are going. Focus and greater understanding could also be placed on the investing in return migration. While the Philippines recognises that many migrants return to the Philippines after living overseas, there is less of an understanding of their impacts on the country, and how it could benefit the country. Lastly, while there was little discussion on the impact of family separation among interview participants, the Filipino government should also address family separation, and the impacts it can have on the family members who stay behind. Similarly, the Canadian government should also recognize this family separation and reconsider the processes and time requirements for family reunification programs.

## Limitations and Future Research

Although this research sheds light on the relationship between citizenship in facilitating diaspora engagements back home, there are particular limitations that are worth noting. Notably, this research only interviewed 12 individuals, which only provides a glimpse into how citizenship translates into transnational activities. Although a trend cannot emerge from this data, it nevertheless provides the ground for further research and challenges states perceptions of legal citizenship. Additionally, it is difficult to study transnational activities at one point in time given the changing climates within Canada and the Philippines that may influence an individual's desire to acquire dual citizenship, such as the real and perceived corruption in the Philippines. Nevertheless, this was partially mitigated by asking participants how their connection and activities differed before and after the 2003 *Citizenship Retention and Re-acquisition Act* was issued.

Similarly, while the *Philippine Citizenship Retention and Reacquisition Act* was signed in 2003, it still may be too early to see a large uptake of reacquiring Filipino citizenship. Despite the *Act* only being implemented slightly over ten years, all participants were aware that dual citizenship is permissible for Filipinos, and it was determined that individuals were not acquiring it for other reasons besides the *Act* being relatively new. Rather, individuals often did not want dual citizenship because they did not know of the benefits, did not see the benefits as worthwhile, or did not trust the Philippine government.

Another limitation concerns the sampling size and the difficulty in finding individuals who currently hold dual citizenship. Although the number of dual citizens for this research was low, I believe that it was moderated by selecting individuals who were

seriously considering or already in the processes of acquiring dual citizenship. This proved to be beneficial given that they were more aware of their intentions of retaining or reacquiring Filipino citizenship, although their intentions may change as well as their actions once they actually acquire dual status. Additional time and resources would be needed to see if individual intentions change upon acquiring citizenship over a longer period of time.

An additional challenge was the lack of current country specific data regarding the number of individuals (re)acquiring Filipino citizenship, and overseas economic and political participation in the Philippines. Specifically, surveys based on nation-state units are not designed to capture flows, linkages, or identities that cross other spatial units or the phenomena and dynamics within them (Levitt & Jaworsky, 2007, 142). Moreover, the last long-form census in Canada was conducted in 2006, and the last National Household Survey was in 2011. Regardless, I used the most recent and publicly available data from national departments, statistics provided by the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa, and additional information from larger organizations such as the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Another challenge and consideration throughout this thesis is the range of possible variables related to diaspora and transnational activities. Countless factors were evidently taken into account when evaluating the activities among diaspora in their home country, including: humanitarian or conflict relief, economic pressure, family members in home country, age, religion, altruism etc. Inference here is made additionally difficult since transnational migrants such as overseas Filipinos must be seen as individual actors,

and should not be considered as a collective actor. This challenge was addressed however, by selecting a wide range of participants from across Canada, and by having a comparison between those who hold dual citizenship and those who hold a single citizenship status.

The research conducted here suggests that transnationalism is not only about a narrowly conceived set of activities through which migrants become involved in the domestic politics of their home countries; it also affects collective identities and conceptions of citizenship among the native populations in both receiving and sending societies (Bauböck, 2003, 700). Moving forward, additional research could explore how transnationalism affects identity formation and how this impacts individual and group engagement. Additionally, from what has been discussed, we see that little research is being conducted or discussed about reintegration and the impacts of return migration, and what this could mean for social remittances. This could provide the possibility to share learned skills and experiences to make a more sustainable impact on migration and those who return. Nevertheless, while migration is often seen as beneficial for those who leave, we must bear in mind that out-migration is not a long-term solution to local poverty and that countries must look inwards rather than relying outwards on their diaspora for real change to occur.

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## APPENDIX A: ETHICS APPROVAL

File Number: 10-14-20

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 11/18/2014



**Université d'Ottawa**      **University of Ottawa**  
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche      Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

### Ethics Approval Notice Social Sciences and Humanities REB

**Principal Investigator / Supervisor / Co-investigator(s) / Student(s)**

<b>First Name</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Role</b>
Hélène	Pellerin	Social Sciences / Political Science	Supervisor
Jocelyn	Vander Meulen	Social Sciences / Political Science	Student Researcher

**File Number:** 10-14-20

**Type of Project:** Master's Thesis

**Title:** Citizenship and diaspora home-engagement: Case of the Philippines

<b>Approval Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Expiry Date (mm/dd/yyyy)</b>	<b>Approval Type</b>
11/18/2014	11/17/2015	Ia

(Ia: Approval, Ib: Approval for initial stage only)

**Special Conditions / Comments:**

N/A



**Université d'Ottawa** **University of Ottawa**  
Bureau d'éthique et d'intégrité de la recherche Office of Research Ethics and Integrity

This is to confirm that the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Board identified above, which operates in accordance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement (2010) and other applicable laws and regulations in Ontario, has examined and approved the ethics application for the above named research project. Ethics approval is valid for the period indicated above and subject to the conditions listed in the section entitled "Special Conditions / Comments".

During the course of the project, the protocol may not be modified without prior written approval from the REB except when necessary to remove participants from immediate endangerment or when the modification(s) pertain to only administrative or logistical components of the project (e.g., change of telephone number). Investigators must also promptly alert the REB of any changes which increase the risk to participant(s), any changes which considerably affect the conduct of the project, all unanticipated and harmful events that occur, and new information that may negatively affect the conduct of the project and safety of the participant(s). Modifications to the project, including consent and recruitment documentation, should be submitted to the Ethics Office for approval using the "Modification to research project" form available at: <http://www.research.uottawa.ca/ethics/forms.html>.

Please submit an annual report to the Ethics Office four weeks before the above-referenced expiry date to request a renewal of this ethics approval. To close the file, a final report must be submitted. These documents can be found at: <http://www.research.uottawa.ca/ethics/forms.html>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Ethics Office at extension 5387 or by e-mail at: [ethics@uOttawa.ca](mailto:ethics@uOttawa.ca).

## APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. General/Citizenship questions:
  - a. How long have you lived in Canada?
  - b. Do you have dual citizenship?
  - c. What benefits do you gain by holding dual citizenship?
  - d. How do you manage having two citizenships?
  - e. Do you have a sense of belonging or connection to the Philippines?
  - f. How would you describe your connection to the Philippines?
  - g. What type of activities do you engage in the Philippines while living in Canada?
  - h. Do you belong to any Filipino groups in Canada? Explain.
  - i. How do you see citizenship connecting you to the Philippines?
  - j. Do you think citizenship facilitates different activities and opportunities? If so, how?
  - k. Do you have any family members in the Philippines? If so, how many and what is your relation?
  - l. How do your family and friends who live in the Philippines perceive you?
  - m. Do you travel to the Philippines?
  - n. If so, how often do you travel back to the Philippines, and how do people treat you?
  - o. What do you do when you travel back to the Philippines?
  - p. Are you familiar with the Filipino Nationality Law?
  - q. How did your engagement or connection to the Philippines change after 2003 when the Philippines changed its citizenship laws?
  - r. Say you lost Filipino citizenship, but then the Philippines told you that you could regain it, would you just keep your Canadian citizenship, or would you reacquire your Filipino citizenship? Explain.
  - s. Do you have any intentions of ever returning to the Philippines? If so, why?
  - t. Would you ever consider dropping Filipino citizenship? If so, why?
  - u. Would you like your children to hold dual citizenship? Explain.
2. Filipino Policies:
  - a. Do you feel that the Filipino government engages with its citizens abroad in a positive or negative way?
  - b. Are you aware of any diaspora policies in the Philippines that aim to connect with Filipino citizens abroad?
  - c. Why do you think the government tries to connect with its overseas citizens?
  - d. Are you familiar with *Lingkod sa Kapwa Pilipino Program* (also known as the *Link for Philippine Development Program* or *LINKAPIL*)?
  - e. Do you feel pressure from the government to send money?
  - f. Are you familiar with the National days that commemorate overseas Filipinos?
3. Remittances:
  - a. Do you send money back to the Philippines?
  - b. To whom do you send money?
  - c. Why do you send money back home?

- d. What does your money contribute to in the Philippines?
  - e. Who benefits from your money?
  - f. Under what conditions do you send remittances?
  - g. Hypothetically, would you send money back to the Philippines if you only had Canadian citizenship?
  - h. Do you feel pressure from the Filipino community here in Canada to send money?
  - i. Do you send money as a form of patriotism? Or to maintain your Filipino identity?
  - j. Are there any instances of community groups pooling together money, or creating a community foundation that receives money from families abroad and then redistributes it?
  - k. What is the likelihood that the money you send back to the Philippines is invested?
  - l. Will you always send money?
4. Voting:
- a. Do you participate in voting while abroad?
  - b. If yes, why do you vote in Filipino elections?
  - c. How difficult was it for you to vote in Filipino election while living in Canada?
  - d. Do you think countries should allow their overseas citizens to vote while living abroad?
  - e. Do you support any political parties in the Philippines? In what ways?
5. Other:
- a. Do you pay taxes in the Philippines?
  - b. Do you have any investments in the Philippines?
  - c. Do you own property in the Philippines?
  - d. Do you engage in any activities in the Philippines besides sending money or voting?
  - e. Do you see Filipino diaspora as agents of development?
  - f. Do you feel pressure (from any source) to engage and connect back home? (in terms of political participation, moving back, or sending money) Explain.